

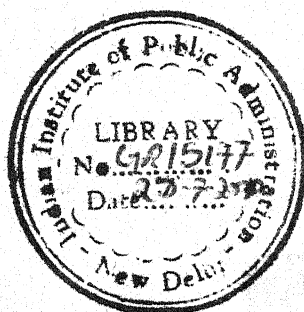
**THE PRINCIPLES OF  
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION**

# THE PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

*A Study in the Mechanics of Social Action*

By  
RICHARD WARNER

*Intelligere quidem et scire contingit circa  
omnes scientias quarum sunt principia et  
causae aut elementa*



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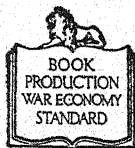
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The Clarendon Press, Oxford, *The New Leviathan* (R. C. Collingwood).

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Messrs. George Routledge and Sons, Ltd., *The Road to Serfdom* (F. A. von Hayek).

## PREFACE

IN the middle of the twentieth century, after the two thousand years of debate which have occurred since political philosophy was created almost ready-made by the Greeks, it is improbable that anyone is likely to make any very novel discoveries about politics or administration.

Any pretence of startling innovation by a new writer in this field would, in fact, rightly give rise to damaging conclusions about his competence and intellectual honesty.

There is, nevertheless, a real sense in which public administration is a "new" subject in our own time. We have, within a single lifetime, moved from a state of affairs in which the executive, or administrative activity of government, meant little or nothing to the great majority of the population of the United Kingdom, to a state of affairs in which the daily lives of every man, woman and child in the country are influenced, conditioned and in some ways definitely formed by the activities of public officials. The range of what may be called unified "social action," in apposition to the sum of the discrete, limited activities of private individuals characteristic of the greater part of the nineteenth century, has enormously expanded. The agency of this transformation is the executive arm of government by which the public administration of the country is directed. In this book this development is regarded primarily as an example of the further extension of that division of labour by which complex modern societies are sustained.

Much has been and will continue to be written about the proper ends of social action. It is the grand theme of politics. The political contest for the prize of being allowed to select and define the ends and purposes of social action has become and may tend, in all democratic countries, to become sharper, more exciting and more intense. Social action arises out of this contest but it does not end when the heat of the political controversy by which it was engendered has cooled and died. On the contrary, it is not until then that social action usually begins. After the politicians depart the administrators must take charge and, from the point of view of the happiness and well-being of individual citizens, it is the administrators who then matter most. The meaning and influence of public administration endures as a force in the world of real affairs in which political controversy may be merely a succession of momentary excitements. Administration, unlike politics, never is, cannot be and probably never should be, exciting. Consequently,

public interest in it, compared with public interest in politics, is so slight that it may be said to be non-existent.

To anyone who is curious about the operation of the forces shaping modern society or is deeply concerned that social action should work efficiently and worthily for the good of mankind, the question of public administration cannot fail to have a deep and abiding interest. It is an interest which will arise in all developed countries owing allegiance to the Rule of Law, whatever their form of government may be, because the idea of development is implicit in the idea of social action.

■ This book is an attempt to survey the whole field of public administration, necessarily in a general introductory manner, and to formulate, it is believed for the first time, a series of analytical principles by which the subject may be presented as a separate topic or discipline in the social sciences.

It being his own belief, stated in the book itself, that no single experience, and hence no one mind, can hope to grasp the whole subject of modern government in its vast range and complexity, the author will be guilty of no mock modesty in disclaiming any ambition to have reached finality upon the difficult and encyclopedic problems which the subject of public administration conceals.

Every attempt to contribute to it must be made tentatively and in the hope that others may thereby be provoked to supply, from a richer experience and deeper insight, those further refinements in analysis, statement, and application, by which alone the validity of the principles themselves may be firmly established. If this result can be achieved there should be good hope that the mechanics of social action may, as time goes on, operate more efficiently, creating less friction and producing fewer frustrations, under a wiser system of control to attain ever more worthy purposes.

RICHARD WARNER

## CHAPTER I

### PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IN PRACTICE

THE formal conditions of work, pay, promotion and composition of the Civil Service, as laid down in official regulations, interesting as they are to civil servants, do not warrant any extended discussion. They can and do vary from country to country without much affecting the principles of public administration. We all know that it is necessary to look beyond the language of the Statute Books if we want to understand how far the laws and the constitution of any country truly guarantee the personal liberty and security of its inhabitants. So also it is necessary to understand more than the letter of the law in order to see what Civil Service rules amount to in practice. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries there were no rules allowing civil servants to accept gifts from public contractors or to take public property as their private "perquisites," but it is well known that they generally did so. Samuel Pepys annually, and with unction, surveyed the increase of his worldly estate in silver, gold and other treasures, rendering thanks to Heaven for benefits which a more searching examination of his conscience would doubtless have credited to Another Place. A century after Samuel Pepys, matters had somewhat improved, but not very much. Public offices were still bought and sold, public property was still stolen by the officials responsible for its custody, or as in the case of the Public Records, was held up to ransom-fees, which the officials pocketed, being demanded for its use. Shocking as the story now seems to us we should remember that Pepys inherited the medieval tradition according to which, in Professor McIlwain's words, "The grant of an office was in effect the same as a grant in land," its value therefore depending upon the manner of its cultivation.

Nowadays, to state as principles that civil servants must not steal and must not take bribes would look just as odd in a book on public administration as a statement that they must not commit arson or murder. In Great Britain it has long been taken for granted that civil servants obey the law of the land and the ten commandments and there is no need to question the assumption here. But before attempting to state the general principles of public administration, there are one or two preliminary considerations worth special mention. To state "principles" may seem an attempt to deal with public administration

as an organized body of knowledge. The preliminary matters which follow are of more immediate practical interest and may be said to illustrate the art of public administration. The word "illustrate" is used deliberately instead of "describe" or "expound" for art is long and life is short, so no one volume is likely to be adequate to so complex a theme. To profess to reduce the *art* (as distinct from the principles or elements) of public administration to writing would be almost as ridiculously ambitious as to profess to describe the art of living. It cannot be done. Some aspects of the subject can be touched upon and in what follows an attempt will be made to illustrate some of the most important.

First, a word about the factors making up the *atmosphere* of public administration. Under this general label may be grouped the often intangible influences, difficult to isolate, define or assess, but nevertheless so real that they colour the whole subject in a very striking manner.

It is difficult to read the literature of public administration of one hundred years ago without experiencing the feeling that, despite our understanding of the men and the measures upon which they were intent, there is something subtly different from our own situation, something almost other worldly about it all. It is more than the obvious differences: the high desks, the massive ledgers, the quill pens, the candles, the sand instead of blotting paper or the scores of clerks who, in an age knowing nothing of typewriters or carbon paper, were condemned to spend their manhood at the dismal and mechanical routine of making "fair copies" in a good round hand of letters, despatches, memoranda and reports.

All these antiquities have vanished and with them also has gone the temper and complexion of their age. It would be amusing and tempting to try to recapture something of the flavour of these older times but it is unnecessary in an introductory volume of this kind to do more than note that "atmosphere" is an important part of official life. Although, like the air we breathe, we are rarely conscious of it, it should nevertheless on no account be left out of the reckoning. The new recruit's appreciation of the "atmosphere" of the service as a whole and of his own department in particular (for there are considerable differences even in so crowded an official neighbourhood as Whitehall) can become alert and sensitive only by experience.

The new recruit's first task will be to learn as soon as he can "how to walk and where to put his feet." That can be difficult enough, particularly in the awkward years of adolescence. It is in fact part of the process of growing up, and civil servants within their departments, like the rest of humanity outside, can spend their lives at it until they cross that nebulous borderline of age, combined with authority and

distinction, sufficiently advanced for them to become models themselves for the aspiring younger generation.

Without attempting to analyse in any detail a problem which is one of life itself rather than of the existence as a government servant alone, it may be worth while trying to set down some of the factors involved. They range from elementary tact, discretion and decorum up to the most complex sensitivities which should be, and usually are, developed in the senior officials in charge of a department.

No civil servant worth his name forgets in the first place that he is put where he is to work for the public. In recent years it has become the fashion for many large businesses and commercial undertakings to make much the same claim for themselves. Advertisements parading the slogan that such and such a company or corporation has no other motive in life than service to the consumer, are apt to read strangely when put alongside some of their annual reports and dividend declarations, not to mention certain official reports on cartels, trusts, combines and monopolies.

Since, however, society to-day can subsist only by a division of labour, it is evident that the business world no less than the public service can have no reason for existence except in so far as it provides public benefits, or what at any given time are popularly supposed to be public benefits. This distinction is sometimes important.

The fact that civil servants are now supported directly from taxation and not as doctors, dentists, lawyers and other professional men are, by the sale of their services at a price, throws their position as public servants into strong relief. From the strict point of view of economic theory this is, of course, no true distinction. Every class and profession of society must draw its remuneration from the total national income to which in turn all contribute, and from that point of view it is immaterial whether they do so by free exchange on the market (which is how business men get their incomes), by more or less customary fees and charges (which make up the incomes of most professional men), or by being allotted a share from national taxation.

A hundred years ago a keen student of public administration strongly advocated that civil servants should be paid by fees collected directly from those of the public requiring their services. This was the way many of them had been paid until the nineteenth century. Nowadays nobody would support such a plan, which is quite impracticable. No civil servant resents the obvious dependence of his income upon taxation, much as it exposes him to the fury of the popular press when Fleet Street indulges in one of its periodical economy crusades. Waste of the national income, if it occurs in the Civil Service, is a crime of which the Service is not guilty alone, and civil servants may be excused the wish that the



crusading and reforming zeal manifested against the Civil Service by certain self-appointed journalistic censors of public morality might sometimes be directed to other leakages through which the national patrimony has been drained away.

The slightly sadistic note which creeps into some of these press campaigns can also appear in reminders to the Civil Service of its duty to the public. Often these exhortations seem to invite the complementary words "or else . . ." and to be redolent of the executioner's block and sudden death. Civil servants, of the 1920's at least, are unlikely to forget the Geddes Axe, as the economy campaign after the first world war was called, still less the period of meanness and penury which it introduced. The public interest involves, in fact, a reciprocal duty of the public towards the Civil Service, but in a book upon public administration it is natural that the emphasis should be put upon the Civil Service side of the relationship.

It will be unnecessary further to labour the point, but from the idea of the public interest, and it alone, flow many of the subsequent maxims which might fill to overflowing the limited pages of any introductory manual.

The first duty of every civil servant, which derives from the principle of public service, is obviously the efficient performance of the job on hand. To encounter so incontestable a truism as this in a manual on the administrative task is so usual that it will probably not provoke the groans it should. For its practical value is just about nil. Not because it is untrue but because it is abstract to the point of being empty of meaning except to those whose rich practical experience enables them to give it concrete substance. Those with this experience do not stand in need of such wide generalizations, which to them are compressed statements of the obvious. They are reminiscent of much of the wisdom of China in so far as it has yet been revealed to us in translation. The great Chinese classic, "The Mean in Action," written over two thousand years ago, describes "the Basic Duties of Rulers" as nine in all. They are: "cultivation of one's self, honouring men of worth, affectionate treatment of the royal family, high respect towards ministers of state, courtesy towards all the officers, fatherly care of the common people, promotion of the hundred crafts, kindly treatment of strangers and the enlistment of the fervent loyalty of the fief holders" (the dependent feudal rulers). Admirable sentiments, all of them, and as little likely to be called in question as other fragments of Chinese wisdom, such as "By standing on tiptoe one cannot keep still" (Laotze).

How can such a summarized list of "the basic duties of rulers" bring about that improved behaviour and high moral tone which was no doubt the motive and purpose of their authors? How is the aspiring

young British civil servant in the twentieth century to be helped to acquire that magic property labelled "efficiency" which he is always told is so essential to those who want to get on in the world? The answer will be found to lie not by inspiration on the Chinese model; the need, as the saying goes, is for perspiration rather than exhortation; for there are no short cuts to enable a speedy climb to be made from a lower level of learning and intelligence to higher levels. [A further reference to this aspect of the subject is made in the conclusion of the preliminary comment on the 8th principle of public administration at the end of Chapter II.]

This does not mean that condensed and abstract wisdom can serve no useful purposes. Many successful men have been inspired and their great energies released by some generalized piece of wisdom which to most people would seem trite or platitudinous. Such a result is, however, so unpredictable and so much a matter of chance that it is impossible to rely upon mere moral sentences to improve public administration, or indeed, anything else.

With these preliminary words of caution it may be useful to look at some of the advice which has been bequeathed by earlier writers. There is a whole literature in which moral reflection and exhortation based upon the experiences of a lifetime are set down with the intention of guiding the footsteps of posterity. The names of such men as Cicero, Marcus Aurelius, Thomas à Kempis, Francis Bacon, Balthasar Gracian, Benjamin Franklin and many others will at once occur to many readers. Similar work specifically addressed to people in the public service is not so voluminous. One of the best which is still too little known is "The Statesman," written by Henry Taylor in 1836.

Despite the fact that he wrote mainly with the work of cabinet ministers and heads of departments in view, the following selections, somewhat condensed and rearranged, from his entertaining and penetrating work will suggest some useful clues to the problem, "How can a civil servant become more efficient?" For "statesmen" in the extracts below, it is both possible and desirable to add "and civil servant."

**Drudgery.** "The drudgery of an office should be encountered early, whilst the energy of youth is at its height and can be driven through anything by the spur of novelty. Nor let any man suppose that he can come to be an adept in statesmanship without having been at some period of his life a thoroughgoing drudge."

#### **Certain points of practice**

**Order.** "Calmness is of the very essence of order; and if calmness be given, order may easily be superinduced."

“Never write in a hurried hand but make a point of writing neatly and clearly, whatever may be the haste.”

**Despatch.** “As fast as papers are received, the party who is to act upon them should examine them so far as to ascertain whether any of them relate to business which requires immediate attention, and should then separate and arrange them. But once so arranged, so that he knows to what subject of what urgency each paper or bundle relates, he should not again suffer himself to look at a paper or handle it, except in the purpose and with the determination to go through with it and despatch the affair. For the practice of looking at papers and handling them without disposing of them, not only wastes the time so employed but breeds an undue impression of difficulty and trouble as connected with them, and the repetition of acts of postponement on any subject tends more and more to the subjugation of the active power in relation to it.”

“A man of business should accustom himself, when there is no other ground of priority, to deal first with the question of the greatest difficulty. . . . This will always be practised by the ablest men.”

**How to state a case.** “The man who estimates the relevancy and significance of the respective facts of a case does in reality form a judgment upon it. He who has the statement of a question after this manner will, generally speaking, have the decision of it :—

1. Begin with a naked narrative of facts and dates, reserving all inferences and comments till the narrative statement shall be completed.
2. Doubtful facts should form a second division of the narrative in which the evidence for and against them should be stated and weighed and the uncertainties as much as possible cleared away.
3. Draw the inferences which should result from the undisputed or ascertained facts.
4. Draw the inferences as modified by the uncertainties.
5. Set forth the measures proper to be taken upon a survey of the entire case.

Nothing is to be avoided which makes *easy reading* of a voluminous and complicated case.

In purely argumentative statements, it is essential that the issue to be proved should be distinctly announced in the beginning.

When the chain of argument is long, give a forecast of the principal bearings and junctures.”

**Official style.** “The leading rule is to be content to be commonplace.

“Any point of style is to be avoided by a statesman which gives

reason to suppose that he is thinking more of his credit than of his business."

"Style, though it should have the correctness and clearness which education and practice impart to the working of a man of good understanding, should not evince any solicitous precision beyond what may be due to exactitude in the subject matter, much less any ambition of argument for its own sake, and still less of ornament or pungency in like matter gratuitous."

**Precedents.** "Amongst old official men the point of practice most valued is conformity to standing rules and regulations. . . . It is no doubt an excellent thing to be guided by general rules founded upon reason; but unless we know and bear in mind the reason upon which they are founded, it will be frequently impossible to determine justly whether the case to which the rule is applied be not one which it is the duty of the minister to take the trouble of considering separately and independently. For administrative regulations, like other laws, require to be frequently revised and codified as the experience of their operation is extended."

**Decisiveness.** "There is decisiveness of temperament and decisiveness of reason and there is decisiveness which is compounded of both. This last is the best for a statesman. The tendency of the reasoning and contemplative faculty is to suggest more doubts than conclusions and to comprehend in its dealings with a subject more considerations than the human mind is adequate to bring to a clear issue. Temperament is wanted, therefore, to abbreviate the operations of reason and close up the distances, thereby enabling the mind, where many things are doubtful, to seize decisively those which are least so and hold by them as conclusions."

"The pretext for indecisiveness is commonly mature deliberation, but in reality indecisive men occupy themselves less in deliberation than others; for to him who fears to decide, deliberation (which has a foretaste of that fear) soon becomes intolerably irksome, and the mind escapes from the anxiety of it into alien themes . . ."

"The man who has confirmed habits of indecisiveness will come in time to look upon postponement as the first object in all cases; and wherever it seems to be practicable will bend all his faculties to accomplish it."

**Secrecy.** "In nine cases out of ten of betrayed confidence in affairs of State, vanity is the traitor."

"The only secrecy which is worthy of trust in matters of State—and indeed the same may be said of secrecy in private friendship—is that which not merely observes an *enjoined* silence, but which maintains a

considerate and judicious reticence in matters in which silence is preserved to be expedient, though it may *not* have been enjoined."

"Secrecy will hardly be perfectly preserved unless by one who makes it a rule to avoid the whole of a subject of which he has to retain a part."

Interviews. "He who allows himself to be interrupted every hour of the day will be applauded for his assiduity and attention to business."

"Interviews, indeed, make a show of transacting business but business is seldom really and usefully transacted otherwise than in writing."

"A large portion of the questions which come before a minister, arise out of disputes and complaints upon which it is his business to *adjudicate*. His functions in these cases are quasi-judicial. His office is for these purposes a Court of Justice and ought to be a Court of Record. Every step of his procedure, and every ground upon which he rests every step, should appear upon the face of producible documents."

"All applicants for interviews should be required to send in on the day preceding . . . a paper setting forth . . . the object which they seek and the facts which they have to state."

A minister should make it clear "that he will in no case hold himself, his colleagues or his successors, bound by words spoken, unless when they shall have been subsequently reduced to writing and authenticated in that form."

Controlling staff. "He who would serve the great Lawgiver with fidelity must carry the sword of justice in his mouth. A righteous humility will teach a man never to pass a censure in a spirit of exultation ; a righteous courage will teach him never to withhold it from fear of being disliked. Popularity is commonly obtained by a dereliction of the duties of censure under a pretext of humility."

It is over one hundred years since Henry Taylor wrote these words. The Civil Service was then a microscopic affair compared with its present size. There are more people serving in the Ministry of Labour to-day than in all the government departments of Taylor's time. Yet the twentieth century can learn much from his insight and his recommendations.

Most civil servants will have a few practical hints of their own to add to them. For instance:—

The aim is action. We need not invoke the authority of Aristotle to believe that "every art and every inquiry, and similarly every action and pursuit, is thought to aim at some good" in order to believe that civil servants should not write minutes for the fun of the thing. The decisiveness which Henry Taylor advocated is not encouraged if civil servants allow themselves to get into the habit of writing minutes unaccompanied by suggestions for action.

Wherever possible, therefore, every contributor to a departmental file should be required to begin his minute on a subject with a short statement of what he thinks should be done about it *before* giving his reasons. Such a rule will be found to cut out a good deal of verbiage. For the same reason it is also a good rule that those with responsibility for suggesting the best line of action should never write minutes unless they accompany the minute with a draft letter or other communication containing their proposal for dealing with the problem on hand.

It is easier to suggest aids to efficiency on the executive routine side of administration than on its inventive, planning or policy-making side. Orderliness, method and promptitude in dealing with matters coming forward for treatment according to established lines of policy have obvious merits in getting the work done faster and with less effort. There is no such obvious short cut to superior performances on the policy-making side of administration. There, it is a matter of intelligent creative activity, and this demands a well-informed judgment. "Where," asked the Prophet, "shall wisdom be found and what is the price of understanding?" It is a question to which many a harassed administrator would dearly like to know the answer.

Those of our permanent administrative officials who have large responsibilities, that is to say, those who have to suggest new policy, should, according to a well-known American authority on public administration, "be competent to weigh social policies." This thought led him, as it led Plato over two thousand years ago, to the conclusion that "our administrators should be first of all philosophers." Such remarks run the danger of being merely tautological. If perfectly wise men were in charge of human affairs no decision would be taken and nothing would be done which did not embody perfect wisdom. Every evil would be foreseen and provision would be made against it. The rest of us could lie back and take things easily. Such an argument by itself does not carry the matter very far. It involves invoking a *deus ex machina* when points of fundamental difficulty are reached and that is the end of all discussion and with it of all hopes of progress. Social action would be guided automatically by a perfectly balanced and justly formulated set of values handed down to us from the supermen.

The real question, as Plato and our American expert of course realized, is how are the wise men to be produced and put in charge? Their only possible answer is the usual one of careful selection, long training and constant hard work.

Can any hints be given as to how that process may be helped?

The Civil Service Commissioners, through whose examinations all new recruits to the British Civil Service must pass, do their best with the first part of the problem. There is no way of proving that as a result

of their efforts the standard of intelligence, practical wisdom and foresight is higher in the Civil Service than in other professions, but it is usually conceded that on the whole a body of quite able men and women are added to the Service every year by the competitive selective process of the examinations.

Civil servants' subsequent careers depend to a great extent upon their initial grades. A rough-and-ready statement of the requirements of the various grades and the various methods of acquiring the qualities they demand may perhaps be best attempted in tabular form.

MINIMUM ESSENTIAL QUALITIES REQUIRED AT VARIOUS ADMINISTRATIVE LEVELS

Clerical and Executive Grades				Administrative Grades		
Experience and activities aiding development	Knowledge of Branch and Department	Knowledge of special skills, accounts, etc.	Personality, tact, address, success as a team-worker	Knowledge of Department, the Service and the world	Initiative and power of taking responsibility	Judgment
School and college.		✓				
Part-time self education.	✓	✓		✓		
Official courses.	✓	✓		✓		
Contact with seniors.	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Transfer between branches and departments.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Promotion and increased responsibility.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Controlling staff.			✓	✓	✓	✓
Character training, developing morale, leadership.						✓

It is evident from this chart that success in the junior grades of the Service may be had at the expense of more modest demands upon the higher qualities of mind than in the senior and more responsible posts. A truism to all acquainted with the subject, it is nevertheless brought out in a more striking fashion by the analysis provided by the chart than it can be by a merely verbal statement. The chart does not, of course, imply that the junior grades do not actually possess such qualities; it merely points to the hard fact that there is not likely to be so much call for their exercise in those grades.

## SELECTED LIST OF BOOKS AND PERIODICALS ILLUSTRATING

## CHAPTER I

Handbook of Business Administration. American Management Association. W. J. Donald, Editor-in-Chief. London. McGraw Hill. 1931.

Durell, Fletcher. Fundamental Sources of Efficiency. Philadelphia. 1914.

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Urwick, L. Management of To-morrow. London. 1933.

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„ Our Social Heritage. London. 1921.

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## CHAPTER II

### PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

ARE there such things as "principles of public administration" or is the phrase merely used without proper justification to make the subject sound more scientific and impressive?

Few people would now deny that public administration is an art and a difficult one at that. If it is to be more than an art, more that is to say than an incommunicable individual achievement, and become, if not a "science" in the ordinary sense of the word, at least an organized body of knowledge, it must be possible to sum up in "principles" some leading truths of administration having general application. As Cicero finely said of law, "True law is indeed right reason, conformable to nature, pervading all things, constant, eternal, it incites to duty by its commands and deters from crime by its prohibitions. It is not lawful to alter this law, to attempt to repeal any part of it and it is impossible to abrogate it entirely. Nor can we possibly be absolved from this law either by the Senate or the people, nor need we look outside ourselves for any other explanation or interpretation of it; nor will it be one law for Rome and another for Athens; one thing to-day and another to-morrow; but it is a law eternal and unchangeable valid for all nations and at all times and it becomes as it were, the one common god, master and governor of all." [*The Republic*, 3, 22.]

It should be possible to say something similar, in their necessarily more restricted field, about principles in public administration if they are to justify their title.

Yet few writers on public administration have liked to commit themselves by stating any real principles of public administration. Round Table conferences held to evoke their statement have failed to elicit more than isolated aspects of the subject which each speaker regarded as important at that time. A few years ago one of the most distinguished American Professors of Public Administration, in a paper on "The Meaning of Principles in Public Administration," showed that so far few, if any, attempts to proclaim such principles had met with any success. A true principle should, he thought, be "a hypothesis so adequately tested by observation and/or experiment that it may intelligently be put forward as a guide to action or as a means of understanding." Expressed in this way, his definition tends to confuse an explanatory principle and a rule of conduct which are usually best kept distinct. He arrived at

the disappointing conclusion that the work of discovering and disseminating principles in public administration would have to be postponed to an uncertain date in the future.

In England, also, a similar effort ended in the admission that "we cannot say quite clearly what administrative principles are or what they are not."

Clearly this is no very promising foundation for a vaunted "Science" of public administration. Is the situation as bad as this? If so, as our motto on the title page shows, it is clearly premature to talk not merely about a science of administration, but about any real knowledge or understanding of the part it plays in the machinery of social action.

Before attempting to formulate certain general statements which might claim to rank as principles, it is necessary to recall the distinction made in the previous chapter between prudential maxims which are useful guides to conduct and those principles which seek to point to the fundamental reality of public administration as a mode of human action.

It is also desirable to distinguish broad principles of the fundamental type just mentioned from the principles of more restricted application such as the rules evolved under a given conventional way of doing business which may not be of truly general application. During the long life of the Public Accounts Committee of the House of Commons, for instance, a fairly elaborate system of rules governing the methods of work of accountant officers in the British Public Service has been formulated. As mistakes or inadequacies were detected by the Committee appropriate rules were devised by the Administration (in this case the Treasury) to deal with them. Some, no doubt, deserve study by civil servants everywhere but in the main they are relevant to the special conditions of the British system of Vote accounting and cannot be transplanted without adaptation to other and different national financial systems. Important as they are, they are not all the *general* principles of public administration, which are being sought here. The aim will be to find, if possible, a series of summarized statements which lay bare the logical order of the administrative world and which serve therefore to point to the ground to which the very many aspects of the subject may be referred for explanation.

More will be needed than a series of prudential rules or maxims, useful as each are within their own limits.

Some specimens among the many possible prudential rules have already been given and they may now be followed by a selection from the maxims of the Law. The long evolution of legal thought in England has crystallized out into some general legal maxims and also legal principles of a general validity wider than in their application to British practice alone. Naturally, the spirit of English administration cannot differ from

the spirit of English Law. Well-known legal principles may often be remembered with advantage by administrative officials, and for that reason a selection of some of the more important will be given below.

*ubi ius ibi remedium.*

Where there is a right there is a remedy.

*communis error facit ius.*

Common error may in some cases pass current as law.

*in iure non remota causa sed proxima spectatur.*

It were infinite for the law to consider the cause of causes, therefore it looks to immediate cause and judges acts by that.

*actus Dei nemini facit iniuriam.*

The act of God is so treated by the law as to affect no one injuriously.

*lex non cogit ad impossibilia.*

The law does not seek to compel a man to do that which he cannot possibly perform.

*ignorantia facti excusat,  
ignorantia iuris non excusat.*

Ignorance of a material fact may excuse a party from the legal consequences of his conduct, but ignorance of the law, which every man is presumed to know, does not afford excuse.

*volenti non fit injuria.*

It is a general rule of English law that no one can maintain an action for a wrong where he has consented and contributed to the act which occasions his loss.

*interest reipublicae ut sit finis litium.*

After recovery by process of law, there must be an end of litigation.

*de minimis non curat lex.*

Trifling and immaterial matters are no concern of courts of Justice.

*salus populi suprema lex.*

The good of the individual ought to yield to that of the community.

*actio personalis moritur cum persona.*

A personal right of action dies with the person.

*leges posteriores priores contrarias abrogant.*

When the provisions of a later statute are opposed to those of an earlier, the last mentioned must be considered as repealed.

*nova constitutio futuris formam imponere debet, non praeteritis*

A legislative enactment ought to be prospective in its operation and not retroactive to affect the future and not the past.

*rex non potest peccare.*

*non potest rex gratiam facere cum iniuria et damno aliorum.*

*nullum tempus occurrit regi.*

*ubi eadem ratio ibi idem ius.*

*cessante ratione legis cessat ipsa lex.*

*de non apparentibus et non existentibus eadem est ratio.*

*caveat emptor.*

*vigilantibus, non dormientibus, subveniunt iura.*

*qui sentit commodum sentire debet et onus.*

*ex nudo pacto non oritur actio.*

*qui facit per alium facit per se.*

*respondeat superior*

*delegata potestas non potest delegari.*

*optimus interpres rerum usus.*

*cui libet in sua arte perito est credendum.*

*omnia praesumuntur contra spoliatorem.*

*omnia praesumuntur solenniter esse acta.*

*res iudicata pro veritate accipitur.*

The king can do no wrong.

The king cannot confer a favour on one subject which occasions injury and loss to others.

Lapse of time does not bar the right of the Crown.

Like reason makes like law.

Reason is the soul of law and when the reason for any particular law ceases so does the law itself.

Where the Court cannot take notice of a fact it is the same as if the fact had not existed.

Let the purchaser beware what he does.

The laws assist those who are vigilant, not those who sleep over their rights. He who derives the advantage ought to sustain the burden.

No cause of action arises from a bare agreement.

He who does an act through the medium of another party is in law considered as doing it himself.

The person who directs an act to be done is liable with the agent.

A delegated power cannot be again delegated.

Custom is the best interpreter of things.

Credence should be given to one skilled in his peculiar profession.

Every presumption is made against a wrongdoer.

All acts are presumed to be rightly done, or a man acting in a public capacity is presumed to be duly authorized to do so.

Decisions of a court of competent jurisdiction are well founded and their judgments regular.

*res inter alios acta alteri nocere non debet.*

A transaction between two parties ought not to operate to the disadvantage of a third.

*apices iuris non sunt iura.*

Legal quibbles tending to the overthrow or delay of justice are disallowed.

This list must close with the caution contained in a "lay" maxim that "a little knowledge is a dangerous thing," for the interpretation and precise application of these generalizations of the law must be left to those with legal skill. Nevertheless, such pronouncements, founded as they are upon a long experience of transactions among mankind and of social action, cannot but be useful additions to the mental furniture of anyone engaged in public business. Maxims, or "the condensed good sense of nations," as they have been described, should help the persevering student some way along in that search for "the one in the many," that wider all-inclusive understanding which Plato has not been alone in believing to be the goal of philosophy and of the thought of mankind.

Despite their great and obvious value, their scope is too wide, general and indefinite for it to be possible to regard them as those strict principles of public administration to whose elucidation and illustration the present enquiry is devoted.

The leading principles of public administration proper must, in contrast to Sir Henry Taylor's prudential counsels, be of general relevance to the structure and fabric of administrative acts rather than to their detail or the manner of their performance. They must also, in contrast to the principles of human conduct generally, or with the distilled wisdom of the Law, have a specific administrative reference and not all be equally or more closely applicable to other than the administrative walk of life.

We have noted the hesitancy which some of the best minds devoted to the study of public administration have shown in seeking to formulate true principles in the field of public administration. It has been seen how more than one writer has been unwilling to commit himself to the belief that there are, or can be, any true principles in public administration. Modesty alone, therefore, would require that any attempt to provide statements purporting to be principles should be made very tentatively.

With these preliminary words of caution we may proceed to enunciate the following principles of public administration, with the proviso that they are intended to serve the practical purpose of providing an essentially conceptual framework to facilitate the study of a subject which hitherto has seemed to stand in considerable need of such organization. It will not be claimed that they yet approach scientific laws in precision or as a means of prediction. Whether an essentially humanistic body of know-

ledge can ever be reduced to such scientific formulation has yet to be proved. They are not all rules of conduct, neither are they offered in the guise of a creed or programme of ideals on the lines of Wilson's Fourteen Points, of which it has been shrewdly said that "if Wilson had had creative genius he would have seen the futility of the formal acceptance of principles." Rather are they headings under which the facts of public administration may most conveniently be grouped—labels, if you like, for the drawers of filing cabinets in which material for a comprehensive study of the subject may be sorted and arranged. Their utility, therefore, will not be that of condensing "all there is to know" about public administration into a few short sentences, which, when memorized, produce the perfect administrator. In no field of knowledge worthy of the name can wisdom be acquired on the cheap in that way. Still less is it possible to master any of the major human arts by seeking short cuts from manuals or "practical handbooks." Yet condensed and summarized manuals serve a practical purpose if they succeed in showing students the broad dimensions of a subject and at the same time map out its main features and subsidiary aspects in an orderly fashion. Statements which succeed in such a task are surely worth the name of "principles" because they provide clues to the causes or elements of the phenomena which a theory of social action must account for or explain.

## 1. The Principle of Political Direction

1. The objectives of administrative action are defined and authorized by the political authority in a State possessing power to compel members of the society over which it presides to act in certain ways. In democracies such compulsion will be exercised in accordance with the Rule of Law which is the first principle of democratic government.

1.01. Since the ends it pursues are not of its own devising, public administration serves the will of others. That will is formed and expressed by political, not by administrative machinery.

1.02. There is necessarily a strict limit to individual initiative in public administration in so far as the main objectives of administrative action are concerned.

1.03. Public administration is a part only, never the whole of the government (or the Rule of Law) of any country which, to expand the traditional threefold separation of powers popularized by Montesquieu, can be analysed into Electorate and Legislature, Executive and Administration and Judicature. This broad rule is of general application, but it is not sacrosanct and it admits of exceptions. [See 1.07 and 1.08 below.]

1.04. The creative task of the government as a whole is the orderly transformation of one form of social conditions into another form.

1.05. Legislative power, which is chiefly responsible for planning such transformation, is prior in time and superior in authority to the Executive or Administrative Power.

1.06. The Judicature, which is competent to review the procedure used to effect such transformations, is posterior in time and superior in power to the Executive or Administrative Authority.

1.07. Civil servants engaged in public administration cannot be allowed to involve themselves in political activities. By stepping outside their own sphere in this way they would seek to become their own masters, thereby assuming powers for which they have no popular mandate and for which they consequently cannot take responsibility. For this reason they are normally precluded from legislative functions. Legislative power can be delegated to the Executive or Administration, under certain limits and conditions, by the Legislature.

1.08. Civil servants engaged in public administration similarly cannot invade the judicial sphere and become judges or courts of last resort in sustained conflicts over matters with which they deal. Their decisions are subject to review by the judicial power proper. Judicial and quasi-judicial authority can also be conferred upon the Executive or Administration by the Legislature for strictly limited purposes.

1.09. Reciprocally, politics should be kept separate from administration which should be allowed to concentrate upon the tasks assigned to it and be at one remove from the political sphere with its periodical disturbances resulting from changes in public will.

1.10. The power of the purse remains with the Legislature, and expenditure of public funds cannot be pledged by public administrative agencies in advance of legislative approval, at least not without a saving clause making the pledge conditional upon such approval being forthcoming.

#### PRELIMINARY COMMENT ON PRINCIPLE 1

The object of this principle is to exhibit public administration as an agency of government and to show its broad relationship to the other agencies. It depends upon the constitutional principle that whatever laws are passed by Parliament are binding, as the law of the land, on everybody. The implications of this principle, in their simplest form, will be familiar to everyone acquainted with the rudiments of constitutional law and justice.

Administrative theory is distinct from questions of political theory, from theories about law or jurisprudence and from constitutional law and practice (with which in the past it has frequently been confused).

People engaged in administration will no doubt frequently turn with

interest to these disciplines, with which public administration is so closely concerned, but in doing so they should not accept them as substitutes for administrative principles proper.

It also follows from this principle that the Executive, being a subordinate agency of government, is subject to control and must be ready at all times to render an account of its actions. This responsibility is so fundamental to public administration that it is stated as a second principle. For a more extended commentary on this first principle, see Chapter IV.

## 2. Principle of Public Responsibility

2. Administrative action involves responsibility to the Rule of Law, and therefore to the public through the Executive which, in turn, is responsible to the Legislature and liable to control by the Judicature.

2.01. Public administration must therefore be sure of the grounds upon which it acts. It must possess adequate fact-finding machinery to establish those grounds. Hence the necessity for government inspectors, for official enquiries, for the census and for the use of forms and detailed questionnaires.

2.02. Public administration must be able to explain its activities when required to do so. A system of administrative reporting is required and there must be adequate records of the grounds and reasons for its actions as well as of the actions themselves. Hence the necessity for the formal method of conducting official business by correspondence and by written minutes preserved in files.

2.03. Civil servants, while they remain civil servants, have only one allegiance which must serve the political objectives of the public expressed in due form as laws or as directions by politicians in the Government for which the Cabinet takes responsibility. "Hard cases," where civil servants have occasionally shown superior insight and wisdom in opposing such political directions, cannot abrogate the general application of this system. Civil servants must possess sufficient tact and resource to reduce such difficulties to a minimum. In accordance with the adage *Fiat iustitia ruat coelum*, there can never be any question of civil servants attempting to evade or alter the application of the laws of their country on grounds of administrative expediency.

2.04. A bureaucracy, if it exists, is not public administration since it implies that the office (or "bureau") guilty of it is serving its own purposes instead of the public purposes for which it was created [cf. 1.07].

2.05. Responsibility to the public as a whole will tend to require uniformity in administrative action. It will always be difficult in public administration to justify giving special consideration and treatment to individuals, which is not extended generally to all individuals in like circumstances.



## PRELIMINARY COMMENT ON PRINCIPLE 2

The limitations this principle imposes upon administrative action are a direct consequence of fundamental principles of the English constitution such as that which requires that no one may be deprived of his liberty or his rights by administrative action except in due course of law. The reality of administrative responsibility will similarly be evident in varying forms in conformity with other constitutional rules and procedure and with governmental organization generally in various countries.

It must not be supposed that, in the United Kingdom, where administrative or executive power is exercised in the name of the King, civil servants are exempt from control because of the ancient legal maximum "the King can do no wrong" (*rex non potest peccare*). The use of the term "bureaucrat" in derogation of the British civil servant is not justifiable and has not been justifiable in British public administration for nearly a hundred years. [Chapter IV.] Various ways in which administrative action is controlled will be explained later. [Chapter V.]

Here it is necessary only to point to some of the main consequences of the application of this principle. The chief undoubtedly are the formal manner in which administrative business is conducted ["business is seldom really and usefully transacted otherwise than in writing," said Sir Henry Taylor] and the provisions made for preserving orderly records of that business. Cartoonists and comedians may mock the flood of official forms which almost invariably accompany administrative action, they may ridicule Government officials for "nose-poking," but such evidences of official energy are an inevitable part of official machinery; not merely as a method of fact-finding, but also as a method of recording action taken on the facts. In so far as critics of official records, files and archives do not produce constructive proposals for their improvement, abolition or substitution, they are merely beating the air or making useless lamentations leading precisely nowhere. They are little more than noises indicative of personal annoyance which thought would suppress or direct to their proper objectives. Reciprocally, it is the duty of public servants, remembering the first Lord Stamp's dictum that "an organization will only move as fast as its forms let it" constantly to revise and reform this part of its activities.

The far-reaching consequences of this principle may also be illustrated from the rule that civil servants cannot accept distinctions from foreign governments. Queen Elizabeth emphasized this rule with brevity and force when she is said to have replied to one of her officials who had asked if he could accept a foreign order by saying that "dogs should wear only their master's collars."

Administrative responsibility is not merely the responsibility of obey-

ing orders, as a squad of new recruits obeys a drill sergeant on the parade ground. The first two principles of public administration alone might give this erroneous impression, since they are concerned rather with the limitations of executive action. It is important, therefore, to proceed to closer grips with the nature of administrative action as a positive contribution to social order and progress.

Many of the applications of this second principle in public administration will receive some reference in subsequent pages of this work, since the principle clearly states an attitude by which all administrative activity must be coloured. Principle 6, for example, shows how "public relations" emerges from, and is conditioned by it, as do many of the printing and publishing activities of government [2.02].

### 3. Principle of Social Necessity

3. Social action is impossible without administrative action, which is therefore part of its cost.

3.01. Approval of programmes of social action given by the Legislature in the name of the people must be assumed to cover approval for the means of carrying them out in accordance with the maxim "who wills the end, wills the means." The cost and effort involved is in all cases less than the benefits resulting or presumed to result from the public administrative system so created.

3.02. Responsibility to the Rule of Law and to the public is not always sufficiently discharged merely by blindly obeying any and every temporary expression of the public will. In so far as true service to society involves upholding certain objective standards of public wealth and welfare, public administration has a duty to promote them and is justified in attempting to demonstrate their value to the public. Public administration, in other words, is part of the government of a country.

3.03. The benefits procured by public administration are not always measurable in money because it is not possible to assess by quantitative measurement the essentially qualitative changes which differentiate one form of society from another form into which it has been transformed through the agency of public administration. The theory and practice of Economics, therefore, is not an adequate substitute for administrative theory and practice.

3.04. Wherever the exact methods and procedure by which public administration should pursue the objectives assigned to it by the political authority (Principle I) have not been defined and described by that authority (as in the majority of cases they will not have been), it is the clear duty of public administration to make all the plans required by the situation and by the task.

3.05. Public administration is authoritative and must be obeyed unless

it can be shown to be contrary to the Rule of Law, to lack political support or to be vulnerable after judicial review [1.05 and 1.06].

### PRELIMINARY COMMENT ON PRINCIPLE 3

Similar in some respects to the first principle according to which administrative acts are authorized by political decisions, this third principle is nevertheless required in order to direct attention to the nature of the political decisions public administration is called upon to implement and to the grounds of social necessity upon which public administration rests.

It provides the basis upon which administrative technique is developed. Political wisdom in assigning the objectives of state action may amount to genius but it will be powerless unless translated into concrete plans and in day-by-day activity. It is a political decision to replace the normal method of distributing foodstuffs, clothes, and soap through open market sales, by a controlled rationing scheme. It is an administrative activity to plan the ration books, have them printed and delivered, arrange to collect coupons, pursue offenders, to procure and adjust the food supply to meet the needs of the rationed customers, to vary the rationing according to fluctuations in supply, to set up food offices, engage staff, and generally to make the idea of rationing not merely a working reality but an efficient piece of State mechanism.

This principle also supplies a test by which the art or science of public administration in government departments can be distinguished from the administrative activities of private organizations or groups such as charitable societies, voluntary bodies promoting special humane or cultural interests, professional associations and the Churches. To the degree that the administration of these bodies is efficient, they will be found to follow the principles of administration in so far as they are applicable in their operations. The fact that their decisions are not universally and necessarily authoritative and legally binding upon all citizens distinguishes them from the authoritative Executive or public administration.

The Executive arm of government has therefore a public duty which rests upon public responsibility, both of framing and of enforcing its rules and decisions. It is a fact with important repercussions upon public relations policies. It is not necessary for a manual on public administration to begin, as business manuals often do, by describing methods of wooing the consumer, by placing all the emphasis upon merchandizing, sales promotion, advertising and market research. The public have not to be "persuaded" to pay their income tax, fill in their census forms, to take out their gun, game and dog licences, etc. They are properly requested to do so and are punished if they disobey. A public regulation

enforced by penalties is found an effective means of procuring transformations in social actions, unless the regulation lacks support amongst the majority or a very considerable minority of the public concerned. "Prohibition" in the United States was a gigantic administrative effort to transform a society in which many people habitually consumed liquids containing alcohol in some form or another, into a society wherein nobody would be allowed to drink the stuff. Despite tremendous cost, the effort failed. On a smaller scale may be instanced the ineffective rules in England against spitting in public places which are so often disregarded that no attempt is made to enforce them.

To indicate in any comprehensive manner what organized social action involves in Great Britain to-day would involve long descriptions illustrated by numerous examples chosen from a wide variety of fields such as agricultural and horticultural research, milk marketing, the segregation and care of the insane, public contracting and supply for colonial territories, the control of the sale of alcohol, the oversight of a national system of education, the creation and maintenance of national forestry reserves, the utilization of building land, the operation of a national employment agency and many others.

Among the many others, one field, that of social security, is outstanding, both because of the direct and intimate contribution it makes to the well-being of millions of British subjects and because of the widespread public interest taken in it which culminated in 1942 during the discussions of the Report by Sir William Beveridge on "Social Insurance and Allied Services." [Cmd. 6404. H.M.S.O.] A few examples may be drawn from the 300 pages of this Report to indicate what social action and public administration can involve.

At the end of 1938, the year before the war, the following numbers of people were insured in Great Britain in the categories of :

Unemployment	...	...	...	15,895,000
Health	...	...	...	19,706,000
Widows, Orphans and Old Age	...			20,678,000

These classes overlap, of course, since many people participate in all three forms of social insurance. But the point is that somewhere in the Civil Service there are over 55 million "individual" record cards relating to insured people.

These cards become "active" when unemployment, ill-health, old age and death overtake those insured. At the beginning of 1942, when Sir William Beveridge was compiling his report, the following numbers of people were receiving the various forms of State Benefit or assistance listed :

Unemployment Benefit and Assistance	...	...	140,000
National Health : Sickness and Disablement Benefit			800,000
Pensions. Old Age	...	...	3,620,000
Widows (under 60)	...	...	440,000
Workmen's Compensation	...	...	100,000
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			5,100,000

Five million "cases" to attend to mean a lot of work. Very few people can visualize what a million means. This book does not contain more than about one-tenth of a million words.

In addition to the five million people listed above were the numbers receiving relief in institutions (148,000) and in their homes (462,000).

The machinery of public administration which had been devised to undertake this vast rescue work was complex. It is worth while, as an object lesson in practical administration, looking carefully at the following two charts (see pages 26 and 27) which show in outline the range of machinery involved.

The object lesson they provide is not one to be memorized but it should be re-enforced by reading the account of the scope of unemployment, health and contributory pensions schemes contained on pages 223 to 226 of Sir William Beveridge's Report. There are set out such factors in the problem as the eleven general exceptions to the rule that "all persons engaged under a contract of service or as apprentices receiving a money payment are compulsorily insurable under the Unemployment, Health and Contributory Pensions Insurance Schemes." Then it is necessary to distinguish the thirteen other special classes of employment which are within the scope of compulsory health and pensions insurance but not of unemployment insurance; the five other classes within the scope of compulsory employment insurance but not of health and pensions insurance, as well as the five or six special classes within the scope of pensions insurance but not of unemployment or health insurance. Apart from these compulsorily insured classes are the persons entitled to be voluntary contributors for health insurance and pensions insurance and those covered by workmen's compensation insurance. The civil servants dealing with these various forms of insurance must be familiar with all these general exceptions and with a multitude of more specific minor adjustments of the insurance code as well.

The task of administering a national social insurance organization clearly is no bed of roses.

Sir William Beveridge, it will be remembered, proposed to simplify the whole administrative structure by creating a Ministry of Social Security under a Cabinet Minister with a network of regional and local Security Officers for the administration of cash benefits and assistance. The new

Ministry would, under his plan, have been linked with all other Departments concerned in Health and Welfare by a Joint Committee.

Such an administrative simplification would in his view have made possible "immensely improved efficiency in the sense of greater satisfaction to insured persons as consumers of social insurance." The Government decided not to adopt such a complete unification of all social security administration and their proposals [Cmd. 6550. H.M.S.O.] were confined to providing an improved insurance administration, leaving assistance administration under the Assistance Board.

One detailed aspect of social insurance merits comment in connection with the comparisons often made between State enterprise and business enterprise. That considerable improvements in industrial insurance administration were long overdue had been urged for many years. It was again demonstrated by the statement of the expenses of management of 15 leading commercial offices providing industrial assurance policies. In the years 1937-1940, on the average over £3 of every £10 contributed by an insured person was swallowed by the companies as expenses of management. The company with the lowest expense ratio took over £2 10s., while the highest required over £4 from every £10 paid as premiums. Bad as this record sounds, it had been much worse between 1912 and 1917, when some companies absorbed no less than half the money received as premiums in their expenses of management. The average figure of management expenses was then over £4 in every £10 collected. Sir William Beveridge expected that his unified social security administration would provide £697 million of benefits at a total administrative cost of £24 millions; in other words, only seven shillings out of every £10 contributed would be needed to pay for administrative costs. The over-all administrative expenses of the social insurance schemes and allied services which Sir William Beveridge wished to replace were by no means so expensive to operate as the special industrial assurance schemes singled out for comment above. The over-all total represented about 9s. 6d. out of every £10 contributed. The amount saved under Sir William Beveridge's rate may not seem very much if stated as merely 2s. 6d. on every £10 worth of insurance premium, but adjusted to the level to which he expected to see social security payments rise, it amounts to over £8,700,000 a year.

These few facts cannot do more than hint at the vast administrative problem latent within the problem of providing planned social action to defeat the menace of poor health, destitute old age or prolonged unemployment; all evils which countless thousands of British men and women have been forced to endure in the past without a hand to help them and without a ray of hope that they might rise out of the misery into which they were plunged.

# SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS OF EXISTING SCHEMES OF SOCIAL INSURANCE AND ASSISTANCE ADMINISTRATION

	Unemployment Insurance	Health Insurance	Contributory Pensions (Old Age and Widows and Orphans)	Non-Contributory Pensions (Old Age and Blind Persons)	Supplementary Pensions
Central Department	Ministry of Labour and National Service	The Ministry of Health; Department of Health for Scotland; and Welsh Board of Health are responsible for their particular countries. But for the purpose of securing co-ordination the responsible Ministers act together as a joint Committee	Same as for Health Insurance	Commissioners of Customs and Excise	Assistance Board
Assessment Agency	Local Insurance Officers of the Ministry of Labour and National Service		Appropriate Central Department	{ Investigation by local Pension Officer (of Customs and Excise) Assessment by Local Pension Committee (appointed by County Councils and by Boroughs and Urban Districts with population over 20,000— in Scotland by all Burghs)	Assistance Board Area Officers
Payment Agency	Local Offices of Ministry of Labour and National Service	Approved Society* of which the Insured person is a member	Post Office	Post Office	Post Office
Other Administrative Bodies	—	Insurance Committee (for Medical Benefit) for the County or County Borough in which the insured person is resident	—	—	—
Appeal Tribunal	Appeals against an Insurance Officer to a Court of Referees, Appeal against Court of Referees to the Umpire	If dispute between insured person and Approved Society is not settled by arbitration under the Society's rules Department may appoint a referee	Panel of Referees	By claimant or Pensions Officer to Ministry of Health, or Department of Health for Scotland	Local Appeal Tribunal
Statutory Consultative or Advisory Bodies	Unemployment Insurance Statutory Committee	Consultative Councils for National Health Insurance (Approved Societies' Work), One for England and Wales and another for Scotland Dental Benefit Council and the Ophthalmic Benefit Approved Committee	—	—	Local Advisory Committees

\* The benefits of Deposit Contributors (persons who are not members of Approved Societies) are administered by Insurance Committees and the Central Departments.

		Blind Persons Assistance	Unemployment Assistance	Public Assistance	War Pensions			Workmen's Compensation
					Services	Merchantile Marine	Civilians	
Central Department	Assessment Agency	Ministry of Health Department of Health for Scotland and Welsh Board of Health (Board of Education and Training)	Assistance Board	Ministry of Health, Department of Health for Scotland and Welsh Board of Health	Ministry of Pensions	Ministry of Pensions	Ministry of Pensions	Home Office.
		County Council, County Borough Council and the City of London; or, in Scotland, County Councils and large Burghs	Assistance Board Area Officers  Ministry of Labour Local Offices, Assistance Board Area Offices	Public Assistance Committee of County or County Borough Council	{ Ministry of Pensions  Post Office (Paymaster General for Officers' War Pensions)	Ministry of Pensions  Post Office	Ministry of Pensions  Post Office	Settled by agreement between employer and workman, or, in default of agreement, by arbitration, generally in the County Court (in Scotland the Sheriff Court). Disputes on medical issues may be referred through the County (or Sheriff Court) to a medical Referee, whose certificate is conclusive.
Other Local Agencies		Powers delegated to Voluntary Associations in many cases	—	—	—	—	—	—
Appeal Tribunal		—	Local Appeal Tribunals	Ministry of Health, Department of Health for Scotland and Welsh Board of Health	Pensions Appeals Tribunal (still available for the few Great War widows' cases) Central Advisory Committee Special Grants Committee (for Great War cases)	—	—	Appeals on points of law to Court of Appeal (in Scotland, Court of Session) with further appeal to House of Lords.
Statutory Consultative or Advisory Bodies		Advisory Committee on the Welfare of the Blind	Local Advisory Committees	—	War Pensions Committee (local) for applications arising out of Great War. (Non-statutory: At request of Minister these Committees afford same facilities to present war applicants) (Non-statutory: Panel of independent Medical Experts).	(Non-statutory: Civil Injuries Advisory Committee)	(Non-statutory: Civil Injuries Advisory Committee)	



In addition to the Beveridge plan, much discussed and amended as it has been, there are other contemporary examples of administrative problems and machinery such as the plans for a National Health Service, as they were adopted by the Government and described in an official report issued in 1944 [Cmd. 6502. H.M.S.O.]. Reviews of current social problems for which administrative action is recommended periodically appear, many of them as Government publications, whose pages provide a practical illustration of more than one of the principles of public administration set out in this work.

The voluntary principle, once supreme in social administration, has survived in some spheres but necessarily it has rarely been able to operate upon a nation-wide scale and has therefore been unable to spread its overhead charges widely enough to get full economy in working. Moreover, it has suffered because one voluntary agency tends to compete with others. As long as the administration of the National Health Insurance Scheme was entrusted to Approved Societies, for instance, a considerable but avoidable economic loss seemed inevitable. A witness before the Royal Commission on National Health Insurance in 1928 said, "I think the present existence of competition between Approved Societies is a fatal thing. It is most disastrous to good government and economical administration. . . . Take the case of the Society with which I am connected. We spend hundreds of pounds on advertisements, press and otherwise. We have spent thousands of pounds on procurement fees to members; we have spent thousands of pounds on internal expenditure, merely for the sake of counteracting the veiled attacks made on our Society to capture our members and in our turn to do a little capturing of our own. There is no co-ordination possible between Approved Societies because there is no real unity of interest." A single State service, able to use compulsory powers to unify the administration of the National Health Insurance scheme, whatever its other results, should clearly be able to remove the loss which has been occasioned by the attempt to maintain a system of voluntary choice of the channels by which to contribute to the scheme and to draw the benefits it provides.

Such a state of affairs is in obvious contradiction to the principle of least means (4) in a necessary task of social transformation, namely, the task of replacing a state of society in which people are subject to the fear of a total loss of income through ill-health by a society which provides against such a risk by organizing a system of planned insurance on a nation-wide scale. It is a state of affairs that should therefore be capable of improvement by the machinery of public administration in the public interest.

Some of the social action now promoted by political direction (the public education system in England is a good example) was, a hundred

years ago, undertaken not by the State but by voluntary effort. It is, historically, understandable why there should be considerable pressure to make use of existing organizations as far as possible whenever new administrative tasks have to be undertaken. As soon as their continued employment is seen to conflict with more principles of public administration than those with which they may appear to be in agreement their days are likely to be numbered on grounds of public policy generally, if not merely because of their waste in money or efficiency or both. A writer in the *Manchester Guardian* commented (February 9th, 1937) in relation to one such effort to combine the voluntary principle with public administration, "We have been evolving a new professional class in this country, the professional voluntary worker. . . . I don't like to see a new class of people growing up drawing salaries from public funds, yet drawing such salaries outside public control."

This adverse comment draws its strength from the second and third Principles of Public Administration set out above. However, it must not be taken to imply a sweeping condemnation of the beneficent contribution to worthy social purposes now provided by the many great National Voluntary Societies of Great Britain.

With this third principle, therefore, we see administration existing in its own right. It likewise stresses the critical importance of an adequate administrative machinery and so prepares the way for some guiding principles in the effective organization of such machinery.

The principle (3.03) which calls attention to the impossibility of judging all administrative achievements by a monetary scale emphasizes the importance of the quality of social conditions. Quality and quantity are very often incommensurable. The people of England in the early part of the nineteenth century were cursed by cholera, smallpox, rickets, illiteracy, widespread crime, and a high death-rate. In the twentieth century these evils have been either reduced or abolished. How can a money value be set upon such progress?

An important difference between business enterprise and public administration can be seen in the different attitude taken by each towards qualitative values which do not enter into quantitative monetary reckoning. The disposal of waste residues and by-products of industrial processes affords an excellent illustration of the principle involved. The huge slag heaps, the polluted atmosphere full of smoke, stench and deleterious gases, the poisoned rivers into which industrial waste was and sometimes still is dumped, represent in the aggregate an enormous social evil which for too long entered into no balance sheet. Not until public awareness was thoroughly aroused was a beginning made to control, by administrative regulation, the extent of the damage society was suffering from these causes. The public, who have to pay the cost

of the remedy, have no other money magnitude than that cost by which to measure their gain by the remedy. Yet that gain will very often be clearly of tremendously great social value. How great cannot be expressed in money.

It is naturally imperative that there must be a clear idea of the purposes administration has to attain and if this is not given it must be secured or formulated by the administrators for themselves. So great are the complexities of all the requirements of social action that political machinery alone is unable to plan their execution in all its details. Much, therefore, has to be left to administrative action if the broad political ends desired are to be achieved. This principle, therefore, opens the way for the reciprocal influence of administrative activity upon political activity, achieved in practice in British administration through the co-operation of the higher Civil Service with the political heads of their departments. The necessity of this very close connection between politics and administration has been emphasized in the telling words of Sir Henry Taylor, "Wise men have always perceived that the execution of political measures is in reality the essence of them."

The third principle stresses the authoritative element in public administration. The fact that public administration wields compulsory powers naturally marks it off from other forms of social activity and business enterprise. Naturally also it involves public administration in those discussions about the nature of the State and the character of political sovereignty which have engaged the greatest minds of all ages since Socrates began asking questions about them nearly 2,500 years ago.

The subject matter of this book, the nature of public administration, will not extend to these deep questions of political theory. To that extent its argument is provisional. Nevertheless, it may help somewhat to underline the importance of those ultimate questions of political philosophy and contribute perhaps in a small way to a better understanding of the reality of State action in a modern democratic society.

Concentration upon practical affairs and upon the way in which public administration really works may point to some aspects of State activity which can more easily be understood and appreciated at their proper value on matter-of-fact grounds of administrative activity arising directly out of public utility and expediency than upon grounds of political philosophy. To that extent a valuable insight may be obtained into the working of public administration in the public interest as part of the mechanics of social action and a proportionate amount of metaphysical doubt may usefully be removed from discussions in which for many it has been the occasion of confusion rather than of real enlightenment.

An example of the aid which mere administrative analysis can bring to theoretical political argument may help.

Frequent reference will be made in this work to the principle of the division of labour as the grand principle of social action upon which all hopes of social progress ultimately rest. Public administration has not often been regarded in this way as merely one of the very many kinds of industries or occupations into which the labour force of the country is divided. On the contrary, administration seems to have been generally thought of as part of "The Government" and therefore as something set apart and above the day-to-day, bread-and-butter earning jobs. From the standpoint of political theory this is right enough as the first and second principles of public administration demonstrate. But from a broader, all inclusive sociological point of view it is misleading to deny that administration is merely one branch of the division of labour in society. Such a denial seems indeed to be a hang-over from medieval notions about divine rights of kings and from disputes in more enlightened ages about the nature of political sovereignty. The abstruse arguments which have been evolved in the course of these discussions can undoubtedly become of absorbing interest, but they fail to explain a policeman, to take one of the most obvious embodiments of State sovereignty.

The plain doctrine of the division of labour as the basis of modern society, on the other hand, can explain a policeman very easily. It shows how, up to just over a hundred years ago, the public themselves were expected to do most of the policeman's duties, including the pursuit by hue and cry of offenders against society. It shows how these duties were not well done because it was nobody's obvious job to do them. It goes on to describe the tremendous fuss and bother caused, mainly it is to be feared by people with muddled notions about the liberty of the subject, political theory, State sovereignty and social action in general, when the daring notion was suggested that policemen should be hired to undertake the police jobs which everybody (except the criminals and the muddle-headed ones) wanted to see properly done.

It then proceeds to demonstrate that, as soon as the further division of labour in society was made, and the police force was created, the evils so glaringly prophesied as certain to result did not occur. It is true that the police force may have had its black sheep who betrayed their public responsibilities. Occasionally, very occasionally, there are dismissals from the police force and sentences of imprisonment upon policemen for crimes and misdemeanours. In recent years there has been at least one major scare that police powers were being abused (the "Savage" case). But these distressing events occur no more frequently in the police force than in many other walks of life. A country which occasionally sees some of its clergy in the dock should not be surprised if a policeman is sometimes in it also.

Of vastly greater significance than the shortcomings of the police, is the great and positive contribution they make to the safe, orderly and efficient conduct of social life. For the vast majority of the inhabitants of the British Isles a policeman is somebody who tells you the way when you are lost. He is not a specimen of State sovereignty. "If you want to know the time ask a policeman" used to be the refrain in the days when fewer people had watches. It is true that he helps to keep order in the streets, directing traffic, lining the route of a public or Royal procession, preventing street-corner touts making a nuisance of themselves, helping people injured in street accidents, stopping runaway horses and so on. The connection of the police with the pursuit of felons and criminals remains for most people a purely marginal matter. How marginal can be judged by the rarity with which members of the public see police making arrests. Somebody would have to do these jobs, and who better than a policeman? When a better way of doing any of these jobs is found the policeman is no longer needed. Automatic traffic signals have replaced policemen on thousands of exposed and dangerous road junctions. A more efficient way of getting that particular form of necessary social action has been found and all that the police now have to do is to inspect the traffic lights instead of to control the traffic. What better illustration could there be of the essential truth that public administration is a part of the necessary daily task of modern social or communal life? What is the political theory or the State sovereignty aspect of traffic lights for the average motorist? How few of the forty-five million inhabitants of Great Britain have ever been ordered about by a policeman? They have probably endured vastly more commands from school teachers and 'bus conductors, who are not usually regarded as embodiments of State sovereignty at all.

Until public administration is put upon a plain, obvious and immediately intelligible basis as being part of the necessary division of labour in a modern society, it will continue to be fogged by unreal debates. It must be seen that in a society which depends for existence upon the division of labour there can be no grounds for regarding any one sectional occupation as inherently more *necessary* than another. All are obviously necessary. Some occupations may be more *difficult* than others, some may be wanted to start, co-ordinate or control the others, and hence seem to have a higher priority or importance, but their inherent necessity to the social organization has its sole basis in the division of labour which is and must be a purely quantitative notion.

A clerk in the Inland Revenue Department serves a political master, a clerk in a shipping office serves a private company. Both are essential to the efficient conduct of the nation's business in the sense that if they were not where they are, somebody else would have to do their work.

Their contribution to society is the main thing to grasp, before worrying about the political or non-political character of their employers. It is essential to look at public administration as a manner of dividing up the labour force of society and to regard it first and foremost realistically for its contribution to social action in the performance of certain necessary tasks without which society would be the poorer. Unless this point of view is taken at the outset there is no limit to the nonsense which well-meaning people will talk about bureaucracy, about man *versus* the State, about threats to the liberty of the subject, the duty of contingent anarchy, the decay of politics, and all the other bogies which seem to arise as soon as discussion leaves the firm ground of practical reality, and instead of asking how to effect this or that improvement in society, soars into the ethereal realms of political aerobatics. Dialectical exercises in political generalization have their place and need not be dismissed as academic or be confined to undergraduate debating clubs, the "nursery" where men and women are trained for practical life. At the same time they should not be allowed to monopolize the treatment of urgent social problems, infecting them all profoundly with an academic political colouring. They should introduce people to the real problems of social action, not disable them in attacking them. To launch young minds into current affairs by way of a training in dialectical politics is surely as curious as it would be to try to train young officers for their army career on the higher strategy before they had learned the difference between a howitzer and a hand grenade.

Some acquaintance with the principles of tactics, of administrative as well as of military tactics, seems more obviously desirable in the way of initial equipment if the really difficult political tasks are to be understood as military tasks have to be understood.

When society faces the need to increase coal production, to get recruits for the army, to grow more wheat, potatoes, and sugar beet, fairly to share out limited stocks of essential foods and clothes, it has a practical problem of organization on its hands. Such problems can be turned over to public administration to get on with without administrators needing to take up a position in a dialectical warfare of political ideology. As long as they are held up by dialectical warfare, things do not get done. Public education was held up for several generations in England and English boys and girls remained illiterate because politicians and clergymen were frightened that they might absorb wrong ideas about God and the State with their A.B.C. and multiplication tables. Dr. Barnardo had to organize by private enterprise ways and means of preventing the most shameful national degradation in the lack of treatment of the uncared-for child. When Mr. Lloyd George sought to introduce an administrative scheme of social insurance to take sick and disabled

workers off the parish poor relief he almost rent society in twain. Slowly people learned more about the way public administration can introduce useful forms of social action by extending the principle of the division of labour in society. Comprehensive schemes of public education and social insurance then began to be accepted by "public opinion" and pass through the political machinery with either little difficulty or with unanimous approval.

The difficulties for public administration of course thereupon only begin. Critics of the schemes then have a more useful part to play. They must descend from political generalizations to the tough, practical task of finding ways and means. Let us now examine the principles to help in this search for the process whereby politics or policy become translated into concrete forms of social action.

#### 4. Principle of Efficiency

4. Public administration must apply the principle of increasing rationality to the conduct of public affairs.

4.01. The transformation of one set of social conditions into another by public administration involves effort and cost, which is the "coefficient of social transformation" or the cost of public administration.

4.02. Public administration must achieve its ends by the expenditure of least means, that is, it must keep the coefficient of social transformation as low as possible.

4.03. Administrative action will be effective in proportion as due care is taken to perfect administrative methods which include, besides Organization [Principle 5], Public Relations [Principle 6], and Research [Principle 8] :—

4.031. Clear preliminary definition of the task as a whole.

4.032. Clear assignment of duties.

4.033. Encouragement of administrative resource, initiative, judgment, responsibility and invention.

4.034. Adequate arrangements for the recruitment, training and payment of staff of the right type for the varied range of duties to be performed.

4.035. Establishment of standards of performance, ability and of responsibility for their maintenance.

4.036. Achievement of operative efficiency, eliminating unnecessary office-work and delays.

4.037. Effective organization of common supply services, stationery, printing, accommodation and office buildings and furniture.

4.038. Devising efficient internal controlling authority and the mechanism by which it operates.

## PRELIMINARY COMMENT ON PRINCIPLE 4

With this principle the twin ideas of rational planning and economic efficiency are introduced. In that sense this principle is not one with an exclusive application in the realm of public administration, since many other human activities also seek to be both efficient and economic. Nevertheless, the guidance of a principle of such general applicability cannot be omitted from a set of administrative principles, because without it the subject would lack a standard by which its performance could be assessed.

Whether or not the "law of increasing rationality" can be seen in the historical development of human society generally, it clearly should characterize public administration. Let anyone inclined to disagree with this statement try to suggest an alternative principle for the guidance of administrative effort.

Politics has been described as "a process whereby one condition of human life is converted into another." It is said to have "two ends like a mill race, one where the water goes in and one where the water comes out." Modifying this analogy, may we not liken the water pouring into the mill race to the political force which drives the mill wheel, while the wheel itself motivates a whole system of other wheels, rods and pulleys which together make up the machinery of public administration? Administration in other words is the mechanism whereby politics succeed in converting one condition of human life into another.

Just as price is now thought of by economists as "a coefficient of transformation," an index of the greater or less difficulty of obtaining one desirable thing (food, clothing, shelter, etc.) by exchanging it for another desirable thing (money, securities, gold, etc.), so the cost of administration may be said to be the coefficient of the process of converting one condition of human life into another. The principle of public administration here discussed aims at keeping that coefficient as low as possible. To say this is not to elevate notions of cheeseparating economy into independent political ends. There are often times when short-sighted critics talk as though any expenditure of public money is necessarily a bad thing in itself, without taking into consideration what is bought with the money. Because money is spent by an administrative agency some reluctant taxpayers transfer their animosity, or some of it at least, to the administrative agents concerned. Such an attitude is understandable in times of great poverty and scarcity of resources and there can always be criticism of the objects of public expenditure (as there was, for example, when the British Museum spent £100,000 on a fragment of an early manuscript Bible, the *Codex Sinaiticus*), but to say that no outlay may be incurred which does not enter into a cost-profit



calculation is deplorably short-sighted for the reasons explained in principle 3.02 above and in the comment upon it. Adherence to such a doctrine would rule out of order all efforts to improve the quality of life: all attempts to make cities more pleasant by improving their public buildings, by providing parks and art galleries. It would strike also, as for many years it did strike, at ways whereby human beings could be made healthier, better educated and more civilized. We have arrived at our own positive point of view on these questions by the hard road of experience. "Manchesterism" and nineteenth century notions of orthodoxy in the levying and expenditure of public funds have created so many aesthetic wildernesses in British towns, from which so many millions now feel the strongest urge to escape, that there is little future for a merely negative attitude which would continue to resist administrative action to improve the quality of life merely on the ground that it costs money.

More specific applications of this principle are evident in the special administrative machinery developed to handle and record the expenditure of public money. The money measure is, as we have seen, by no means the sole satisfactory criterion of administrative action. "There is no wealth but Life" was the vague but essentially sound emotional reaction with which the followers of John Ruskin attacked and maddened the economists who could not develop the principles of their own subject unless they used the financial yard-stick on every possible occasion. Undoubtedly over wide areas of public administration it is essential to use money as the measure of performance. The special position of the accounting officer in every public department and the special position of the Treasury among public departments give visible recognition to the paramount importance of the principle of least means in public administration.

With this principle also it becomes possible to focus somewhat more definitely the content of the vague word "efficiency" in public administration. General recommendations for "more efficiency," as it has been seen earlier, are almost inevitable accompaniments of discussions about public administration, but as long as they are left general and never become specific they are the modern equivalent of that wringing of hands and gnashing of teeth which in ancient times were the sole resource of bewildered humanity faced with ultimate calamity. Unless some recommendations of more practical utility can be provided, silence seems a more dignified attitude.

The full expansion of this principle would require a separate treatise in which practical advice such as that quoted from Sir Henry Taylor in the first chapter, would be given as well as a more extended discussion, with examples, of methods by which such principles as those

enumerated from 4.081 to 4.088 can be translated into practical action. Under 4.085, for example, it would be necessary to discuss methods of measuring administrative output. It would be seen that objective, quantitative standards of performance are rarely adequate above the admittedly very large blocks of routine work undertaken by subordinate grades. For the assessment of higher grades of work where qualitative standards are chiefly in question, assessment must inevitably be more subjective. Then a danger of biased judgment is so much the greater because of the ease with which extraneous factors, some of them probably unconsciously effective, enter into the question.

The "efficiency" of public administration by no means turns upon the application of this principle alone since it depends obviously upon good practice over the entire range of the subject embraced by the principles as a whole. Nevertheless, it is in the context of the present principle that detailed specifications for operating efficiency find their logical place.

Another important aspect of this principle is the further enlightenment it brings to the reciprocal influence noted under principle 3, between civil servant and political chief.

Obviously it is impossible for politicians in the legislature to plan a programme of social action involving the introduction of some important new measure for "transforming one condition of human life into another" unless they make a very careful study of the means whereby it can be done. Who knows better how to make such plans than the professional administrators who have learned by long experience not merely the art of devising but of actually executing and supervising the means of administrative action? They are in fact the men marked out in advance for consultation by the politicians at every stage of the legislative process.

Earl Baldwin once delighted an audience of administrators by comparing a political chief of an administrative department to a small boy driving a donkey cart to a distant market. A kindly onlooker remarked that the little boy seemed very young to be able to find his way alone, only to be met with the little boy's reply that although he was only ten the donkey was thirty.

To balance this story on the politician's side, it may perhaps be coupled with Samuel Johnson's comforting words that "he who drives fat oxen need not himself be fat."

Exactly how the reciprocal influence between administrator and politician works out in practice cannot be reduced to a formula for the obvious reason that it depends upon such constantly variable factors as the men concerned, the measures involved, the state of public opinion and the alignment of political forces in Parliament and in the country

at any one time. The biographies of distinguished politicians which are many, and the biographies of distinguished civil servants which are few, sometimes, but by no means as frequently as the patient enquirer hopes, offer rewarding insight into these complex tangles of men and events.

Apart from these wide general questions which lead to considerations of constitutional law and practice lying beyond the scope of this volume, it is important to note that upon this principle of least means depends the justification for centralized purchasing and supply departments in the public service such as the Ministry of Works and His Majesty's Stationery Office in this country and the Government Printing Office in the United States. From it also results the specialized attention now given to organization and methods in the British Treasury.

Interpreted in conjunction with the preceding principles, it should also serve as a guide to those engaged in estimating the incidence of costs of social transformation, in the selection of priorities among the many desirable forms of social transformation and in particular in calculating the prices and rates to be charged by government organizations providing goods and services on repayment. Such, for example, are the Post Office, controlling the major part of the network of communications, and His Majesty's Stationery Office, acting as publisher of official books and pamphlets.

## 5. Principle of Organization

5. Complex by reason of its many duties, yet unified by its one purpose of performing nationally assigned tasks, public administration must be structurally organized by the division and co-ordination of its labour force so as to present a fully integrated activity.

5.01. The division of labour in public administration must provide an adequate analysis of the tasks to be accomplished and ensure, in accordance with the principle of least means [4.02] a sufficient labour force to discharge each duty [4.034].

5.02. A clear line of responsibility must extend throughout public administration as a whole and in each of its branches to ensure the adequate performance of the tasks assigned. That is to say each department must be satisfactorily structured "perpendicularly." This is the principle of unified command (and of "the line") by which in the last resort all executive action is directed and controlled.

5.03. Advisory or "staff" duties must be created wherever special technical aid is required by the "line."

This is the principle of "the staff" by which the "line" authorities are advised (but not controlled). Final responsibility for the efficient management of a public department, as of any large scale organization, rests with "the line," which must therefore always be stronger than

the "staff." The "staff" may also be structured perpendicularly in its own "staff" department, in which case it possesses "line" authority within that department, but not beyond.

5.04. The solutions which public administration provides to the problem of social management and control involve problems so numerous and so complex that they transcend individual human capacity to comprehend together at one time. They attain cohesion and become effectively operative when successfully co-ordinated one with another. This is the principle of horizontal correlation which is observed in all departments and between departments.

5.05. The aim of organization will be to provide at all levels of administrative activity, positions of "line" authority [in accordance with 5.01] and wherever the activity requires, clusters of horizontally correlated authority able to accept responsibility for the particular work involved at such levels.

#### PRELIMINARY COMMENT ON PRINCIPLE 5

This principle draws special attention to the need for careful organization or "structuring" of the administrative machinery. Although partly implied in the principle of least means according to which the administrative structure must be as economical in manpower and in departmental costs as possible, that principle needs supplementing by a specific principle to deal with the whole of the problem of organization.

In common with all social effort, public administration is characterized by the division and specialization of the labour it employs. The application of this general principle of the division of labour results in the hierarchical (or "scalar") grading of the staff employed, in the means adopted to recruit and select labour needed in the various grades (typing, clerical, executive and administrative) and in the division of the administrative task between a considerable number of public departments, each specializing in a particular function or group of related functions.

Two main problems arise immediately from the fact of this specialization. Each department has to operate as an efficient unit. "Vertical" correlation has therefore to be achieved within the department whereby all the officials in it from top to bottom work to advance the objects for which the department exists. If the department contains many divisions and branches, these also have to be organized so that they co-operate effectively with each other. They have to be correlated "horizontally" as well. Only by such a mechanism can the work of a great public department (or business organization) cope with its daily now vast mass of business. Only by creating points of authority in the vertical or "scalar" line can the head of the department be spared the necessity of making every decision himself. Only by relating these points of authority

"horizontally" can problems be taken care of on all their various sides and aspects by the departmental officers specializing in each of them. For every such side or aspect will have its own specialist [5.01, 5.08] and by proper organization they have to co-operate to create policy and solutions for all departmental problems [5.04, 5.05].

These "vertical" and "horizontal" relations within a department find a parallel in the relations of the various departments with each other. A subordinate department like His Majesty's Stationery Office must be "vertically" correlated with the Treasury, the department upon which it depends for its policy. Other departments must be correlated horizontally with each other. The need for such horizontal correlation was specially evident during the war where interdepartmental committees, and especially conferences, became a regular part of the routine of Whitehall life. A large-scale export of coal in war-time, for example, interested the Ministry of Fuel and Power, the Ministry of War Transport, the Ministry of Economic Warfare, the Board of Trade, the Ministry of Supply, the Ministry of Production, the Treasury, the Admiralty, and perhaps the Dominions Office, Colonial Office and War Office.

Whenever the need for administrative reform is stated, some recommendation for better co-ordination or closer integration is usually made. Like the plea for "more efficiency" noted in the preliminary comment upon the fourth principle, an administrative or executive official cannot derive much light and guidance from it. It is another of those moralizing generalizations of the "Be good, sweet maid" type which rightly drive to distraction any maid who, in addition to being sweet, is intelligent as well.

How is "closer integration" to be achieved? Obviously the wider the field embraced by public administration, the greater the need for joint consultation and planning. "Co-ordination," "correlation," "integration" are doubtless blessed words covering a multitude of administrative virtues. The task of achieving a properly co-ordinated and well-integrated line of action within a reasonably short space of time often seems the be-all and end-all of the existence of many a harassed administrator. None who has not beaten his brains on such problems can imagine the difficulties and niceties of the task, the pitfalls that beset the path of an administrator inevitably not fully informed on every aspect of his problem and perhaps ignorant also of less tangible facts about the organization and personalities in the other departments or bodies concerned.

How, then, should co-ordination be sought? During some discussion about the reorganization of the Foreign Office in August, 1945, it was suggested that the Foreign Office ought perhaps to be very much enlarged,

the inference being that the Foreign Secretary should become responsible for all the relations of Great Britain with the rest of the world. Another proposal was that the Foreign Secretary should direct a planning authority or general staff whose decisions would be carried out not necessarily through the Foreign Office but through a number of other departments as well. In a letter to *The Times* of September 1st, 1945, Mr. Dingle Foot pointed out that the first remedy would involve the Foreign Office in duties for which the Treasury and Board of Trade are at present responsible and would result in a very ambitious and unwieldy Foreign Office. The second remedy would strike at the doctrine of Ministerial responsibility by empowering the Foreign Secretary to give orders to officials in other departments. Instead of a general staff in any one Department, he advocated an interdepartmental general staff responsible to a Cabinet Committee. He referred to the work of the Joint Planning Committee and the Joint Intelligence Committee set up during the war to advise the Chiefs of Staff and through them the Defence Committee of the War Cabinet, which were assisted by whole-time interdepartmental staffs drawn from the three Service departments, the Foreign Office and the Ministry of Economic Warfare. These civil servants, he said, "kept in close touch with their parent departments, but the greater part of their time was spent in working together. It is safe to say that they achieved a remarkable degree of cohesion and did much to avoid the ever-present danger of conflicting policies being pursued." He went on to remark that "It is difficult to see why such an experiment should not be equally successful in other fields of administration."

This idea of an interdepartmental staff reporting to a Ministerial Sub-Committee of the Cabinet (in this case a foreign affairs committee) is a proposal based upon the need for greater horizontal correlation which at the same time respects the doctrine that policy must be made by Ministers rather than by civil servants. Such horizontal correlation would rightly begin at the ministerial level through the Cabinet Committee. Whatever solution is found it can safely be predicted in advance that it will not prove efficient or successful unless it provides the horizontal correlation which Mr. Foot's proposal was designed to secure.

Under this fifth principle of organization also a place is to be found for those all-important questions of "teamwork," of willingness to co-operate, of aversion to "Whitehall battles" and preference for a sound *esprit de corps* and response to good leadership without which all administrative endeavour would very soon come to grief.

Some of the most important questions of public administration are, in fact, covered by this principle. Upon their successful solution depends in large measure the value of the contribution public administration can make to social well-being. It should be a fruitful source of research.

Is it true, for example, as some people have said, that no single human brain can successfully co-ordinate the operations of more than five or six others? Upon the answer to such a question many things will depend, for instance, the optimum size of any "staff" attached to any one "line" executive.

This fifth principle, combined with the previous principle, is also able to guide administrators in their approach to new tasks. In the nineteenth century in the United Kingdom, and especially in the United States, there was a tendency to create a new administrative organization whenever a new task was assigned to the public service. Such an automatic initiative was excellent in so far as it bore testimony to the undoubted administrative truth that it is no use expecting a job to be done unless it is made somebody's responsibility to do it. But unfortunately the need for correlation was not always remembered. Consequently, twentieth-century reformers had a grand time in redesigning a cumbrous administrative mechanism by grouping common functions under single departments and tidying up generally.

*Entia non sunt multiplicanda praeter necessitatem* said a medieval schoolman, and public administration to-day wisely pays attention to his words when, as far as possible, it assigns new duties to existing agencies of governments and hesitates long before multiplying administrative entities whenever a new job comes along.

The paramount influence of the Treasury, without whose agreement no new Department or administrative agency can be created, has become characteristic of British public administration.

#### STAFF AND LINE

This principle also introduces the useful analysis of organization by "line and staff." Borrowed from army organization which for centuries was traditionally the oldest and the most effective form of large-scale organization devised by mankind, this division really does no more than point to the fact that it is the duty of one body of men to get on with the job of their organization, whether it be commanding an army and directing it against the enemy, managing a vast commercial organization with subsidiary firms and hundreds of local branches or supervising the executive work of a huge public department such as the General Post Office or Ministry of Labour.

From top to bottom of such an organization a single "line" of authority extends downwards from the Supreme Commander to Army Commanders, Corps Commanders, Divisional Commanders to company commanders and non-commissioned officers. In a business organization, the "line" of authority will extend downwards from the general manager to the area managers and local branch managers who, in turn,

will have sales managers, production managers and accountants subordinate to them. In the Civil Service the "line" descends from Permanent Secretary through the Deputy Secretary, Under Secretaries, Assistant Secretaries, Principals, Executive Officers and Higher Clerical Officers. "Sovereignty is indivisible," says political theory, and all power must ultimately be traced back to a single source. Tempting as it is to connect this notion immediately with the theory of "the line," it is not desirable to do so without an important reservation upon the nature of authority in public administration. For reasons which will be stated more fully later, it is desirable to stress responsibility rather than sovereignty as the true source of administrative authority.

However that may be, it is undoubtedly the case that "line" authority (or responsibility) must remain unbroken and clear. Where there is command, it must be a unified command. So, by identifying "line" officers and tracing their relationships in any organization it should be possible to find the answer to the question "Who is responsible for this or that executive action?" The "staff" principle differs from the "line" principle in that it is primarily a service of advice. A staff is something on which to lean or with which to feel the way in difficult country. It exists to support the executive power with specialized information and wise counsel. The "staff" contribute their specialized advice to those responsible for the main executive duties who, if they accept them, incorporate them in the other instructions they send "down the line." The "staff" itself does not send orders "down the line" unless they are approved by the line authority.

To say this is obviously not to belittle the contribution which good staff work can make to the success of a manufacturing enterprise. All may, in fact, depend upon the ability of sales managers, technical directors, designers, research workers, accountants, advertising managers and legal advisers to contribute sound and constructive ideas for the guidance of the managing director and other line officers. What is true in the sphere of business is not likely to be false in public administration. No secretary, deputy secretary or assistant secretary is likely to ignore advice which the department's legal adviser or public relations officer gives him.

But the fact remains, both in the manufacturing enterprise and the government department, that the man who must make the major decisions and accept full primary personal responsibility for them is the managing director or the permanent secretary. That is why the professional civil servants protest in vain against the decision which confines them, however eminent or important, to positions in public administration subordinate to the administrative officers at the head of "the line." To say this does not mean that staff officers are not responsible for their advice. If the advertising manager makes a bad decision and runs an advertising



campaign with poor "copy" in the wrong media, or fails to synchronize his campaign with the plans of the production and sales department, he is unlikely for long to remain an advertising manager in that particular organization. If an Established officer fails to make adequate arrangements with the Civil Service Commission to maintain a good working force having regard to the rate of probable retirements or if the accounting officer muddles the department's estimates and finds that his appropriations are likely to be overspent, then, unless the fault was plainly that of the "line" for not consulting him or unless there were other exceptional circumstances in extenuation, he is likely to find himself transferred to a less responsible post in the department.

That "staff" officers possess "line" authority within their own departments goes without saying. The advertising manager has the last word in preparing his campaigns and it is he, not the general manager, who has "line" responsibility for the work of copy-writers, artists, layout men, typographers, and space buyers. Similarly, in a public department the Establishment Officer is supreme in the Establishment Division. But all major questions in an advertising department or Establishment Division must be brought to the responsible "line" executive for final decision. Although the staff and line are therefore often two ways of classifying the same man, it does not follow that the distinction between "line" and "staff" is one without a real difference. Early enthusiasm over its first formulation may perhaps have overstressed the true importance of the "line and staff" analysis and it has subsequently not been free from considerable criticism. However, the principle it enshrines affords one line of guidance into the maze of complex questions involved in organization. "Line and staff" may, as some writers have declared, be a key principle of organization, but it clearly does not exhaust the subject and there is much we yet want to know which it cannot tell us.

In many cases of doubt and uncertainty about the respective role and authority to be assigned to officials in any organization, two simple tests will usually clarify the situation. First ask what is the primary task of the organization, secondly decide to call the personnel principally concerned with it "the line," and then separate out the advisory and consultative personnel as "the staff."

The "line and staff" distinction also makes it possible to see more clearly the role of advisory and consultative bodies in public administration. Clearly they are all and must always remain "staff" organizations. Line authority cannot be delegated to them save in exceptional and probably highly technical and relatively unimportant spheres. Again, to judge the role of these bodies in this way is by no means to underrate their value in administrative activity as the next principle will demonstrate.

The general principle of organization should aid those planning an administrative organization who must distinguish and provide for administrative or executive tasks by "functions" or by "areas" where such divisions of activity exist.

So also the principle of organization must be uppermost in the thoughts of those who have to decide upon questions of centralization and decentralization of administrative work in regional and branch offices, and the provision of "line and staff" links between each.

These few deductions and elaborations drawn from the principle of organization by no means exhaust its significance for students of contemporary society. With this brief sketch of its principal characteristics sufficient will have been said for the present to indicate its central position amongst administrative principles and to vindicate its elaboration as a separate principle distinct from the principle of efficiency [or economic operation] with which it runs a risk of being confused. The much-quoted but little-read work of Henri Fayol "*Administration Industrielle et Générale*" seems for example to confuse the matter because all his fourteen so-called general principles of administration are but aspects of the problem of organization.

Further reference will be made to wider implications of the principle of organization in the concluding chapters of this work.

## 6. Principle of Public Relations

6. Administrative activity must as far as possible be integrated with the experience and activity of the people.

6.01. Public relations work in government departments and agencies provides the means of reciprocal influence between the public and administration as well as between administration and public.

6.02. Public relations are valuable to the extent to which they are able to assist in securing an understanding of the aims and methods of departments on the one hand and of public needs and problems on the other hand, thereby facilitating the integration of public experience with administrative action.

6.03. Particular methods of seeking this integration by providing special machinery of public consultation and advice are useful but the nature of administrative activity limits their utility to certain specific but limited spheres, in accordance with the "staff" principle of organization [5.03].

6.04. The people, in the context of this principle, can rarely mean either the public as a whole or the entire electorate. Translated out of abstract into concrete terms, it involves chiefly the particular sections of the public most intimately concerned with the work of one or two departments at any one time. Nevertheless, public administration as a

whole must remember its wider responsibilities when serving sectional needs [in accordance with principle 2].

#### PRELIMINARY COMMENT ON PRINCIPLE 6

This principle points to the manner in which public administration can become truly "democratic." A full discussion of the grounds of this principle would push the enquiry back beyond administration and politics to the personal psychology of the units in the whole political process, to include both the individual elector and the individual official. Not until that is done is the fallacy apparent of the old view which regarded any government as democratic if it was carried on by expert administrators with the bare consent of the governed.

The notion that government and public administration are something bestowed upon those subject to it should be obsolete. If, as psychology now teaches, human thought, will and purpose are generated from human experience, then men cannot be effective politically if the political faith which they are expected to support is foreign to or transcends their experience. Any serious divergency between the theory of government and the practical daily life of the people runs grave dangers, for as Miss Follett an enlightened American writer, said (in *Creative Experience*, 1924, page 205), it "means that between expert and people is a chasm which ideas cannot cross. It means, too, that there is no magic by which consent can be converted into will: if the expert or administrative official wills, it will be for ever the will of the expert or administrative official; there is no will of the people except through the activity of the people. Will and activity do not dwell in separate spheres. Consent is not the technique of democracy. We want the information of expert or official, not to turn us into rubber stamps but as the foundation for the social process. The 'consent of the governed' is intellectualistic doctrine; the will of the people is not to be found on this plane at all."

As this subject is so closely related to the political question, it may seem out of place as an administrative principle. The psychology of politics, however, also needs revision in its light if it is true that "Political leaders cannot persuade people to adopt purposes, the legal order cannot assign purposes; they are found in the so far integrated behaviour of people." The task of discovering the "integrated behaviour of people" which holds the key, on this view, to the true nature of social action, is one in which public administration not only can but certainly ought to take a share.

What is equally important is constantly to bear in mind that "public relations" does not mean something which officials do to the public, but quite as much what the officials learn from the public. With this principle, therefore, public administration gets the authority for its

direct links with the vast public it serves, independently of the political leaders who upon a strict, old-fashioned view of constitutional propriety are the sole proper, orthodox links. Orthodoxy on this subject was most sharply defined in England after the restoration of 1660. Politicians were then keenly averse to any attempt to "appeal to the people" or to invoke popular support or interest in any policy which they considered was a matter for decision by Parliament and the Crown. The Great Rebellion was too recent and too severe an experience for anyone to tolerate activity which, by stirring up the people, might lead to a new outbreak of revolutionary political excitement and unrest.

In our own time a milder controversy has arisen over the sphere of activity of public relations officers. Are they not created for the purpose of "appealing to the people," to "make a case" for departmental activities by indulging in careful propaganda, their real purpose being not that of giving information but of gaining power for their department—power, that is to say, to "put things over" which the department employing them wishes to persuade the people to adopt? If that is true the public relations officer is not so much seeking to obtain the consent of the people to his department's policy as to secure that department's power over the people.

Nowhere among the principles of public administration can justification be found for such malversation of authority.

What the present principle enjoins is something very different, namely, effective interaction between administration and the public affected by administration. It points to the need for an integration of democratic experience and will with the administrative agencies designed for its expression. The normal channel through which that integration should be effected is through Parliament and on major issues it will continue to be Parliament. But on many minor issues it is unnecessary to trouble Parliament. It is also impossible, since Parliament cannot at present handle all the major problems crowding its necessarily limited calendar. Public administration should possess or create sufficient contacts with the public to enable useful adjustments of administrative detail to be effected promptly and satisfactorily. It is then able to provide a remedy on a lowly plane of non-political controversy for problems and difficulties which Parliament has not time to touch. It is not so much delegation of legislative authority as delegation of legislative influence. Administration, by effective public relations is sometimes able to assess the strength of the force of public opinion which would, if the opinion were wide enough, strong enough and general enough, influence the legislature to sanction the sort of rule which administration devises to deal with the difficulty. Stated on such general terms, this remark could be twisted to imply that administration was invading the legislative sphere to an

unwarranted degree. It has been the fashion in recent years to popularize this accusation at the expense of public administration, but it is unjustified. Out of the hundreds of thousands of administrative decisions made each year, it is rare that there are first-class political rows about one of them. If public administration were showing signs of going beyond its proper limits there would be many rows. An efficient administrative system should have the means of finding out quickly "where the shoe pinches" the particular section of the public it serves. Not that they should be entitled to throw away the shoe and tell the customer to go barefoot or wear sandals instead. The politician alone can give that advice. The administrator may undertake commonsense minor adjustments, flattening nails, stretching a little here and there, providing higher or lower heels or a support for the instep, without having to seek permission and "get authority" for every motion he makes.

Apart from minor adjustments in detailed administrative acts and attitudes (often as important as the acts themselves) there is a broad sphere of deliberately created intervention by private persons in the shaping of administrative activities through the establishment of advisory and consultative committees. The legislature, and still more the political executive, have long had the benefit of such guidance through the practice of setting up Committees and Royal Commissions.

More recently administration has similarly profited not merely by appointing departmental and interdepartmental committees able to summon private individuals and experts as witnesses, but also by establishing more or less permanent consultative committees upon which such individuals may sit. Perhaps the best known and most successful of such committees in recent years has been the Consultative Committee of the old Board of Education. This Committee has reviewed the educational system of England and Wales and, in a series of reports has made recommendations which after substantial adoption by the Board, the Cabinet and by Parliament have contributed largely to that reshaping of the structure of public education which has been a marked feature of English social policy in the interval between the world wars.

Such is the urgency of the task which this principle of interaction between people and administration enjoins that exaggerated hopes have perhaps been built upon the efficacy of the consultative and advisory committee. There is, for example, danger that differences in the value of advisory committees in different departments (between the Ministry of Education and Foreign Office, for example) may be overlooked in an indiscriminate advocacy of advisory committees upon everything. The commentary upon the fifth principle above suggests, for instance, that such organizations must always be retained in a strictly advisory "staff" function. In a matter such as foreign relations all major issues are of

such vital concern that they are certain to receive immediate attention in Parliament, and nobody has yet ventured to suggest that Parliament needs an advisory committee to assist it on major issues such as foreign affairs.

How far public administration can be improved by "letting the public in" is an aspect of this study reserved for a later chapter. The particular problem raised by the partisan activities of sectional interests forming "pressure groups" or "lobbies" also makes an important qualification to the principle of Public Relations [see Chapter VII].

Purely as an administrative principle, this Principle of Public Relations is of great importance from the point of view of that "atmosphere" which is capable of great influence in the administrative task. If the policy and activities of an office jibe with considerable sections of public opinion, that office, whether it be a government department like the Ministry of Information in the early days of the war or a public agency like the B.B.C. earlier still, is certain to be an unhappy place. The influence of "atmosphere" is indeed deep and far reaching and not more than a hint of its manifold ramifications can be given here.

## 7. Principle of Evolution and Progress

7. Administrative action embodying as it does the effective execution of ends broadly planned by the political authority of a State tends to operate and expand, subject to the rule of law, as an automatic component of the machinery of government possessing mass and momentum.

7.01. The progress of this tendency, by providing for successive phases of social transformation [1.04] increasingly removes controversial subjects from the arena of acute political controversy leaving political energies free for new tasks or for further adjustments and amendments of the administrative mechanism devised to deal with the old tasks.

7.02. Political progress on the one hand and administrative progress on the other, are real in proportion as these processes of the political formulation and assignment of administrative tasks and their discharge by the machinery of public administration dispose of old controversies and remove or deal with old evils to the general satisfaction of the majority of the electorate; that is to say in proportion to the success with which government successfully accomplishes the continual task of social transformation with which it is entrusted by the electorate.

7.03. The expansion of official machinery which succeeds in performing these tasks cannot be condemned *merely* on grounds of the number and complexity of the administrative organizations, personnel, machinery, rules and orders, etc., they involve. Such matters can be judged solely by criteria afforded by the Principles of Economy [4] (least means) and Organization [5] in relation to the prescribed end.

7.04. Administrative activity engenders attitudes and interests within the administrative framework which themselves affect the administrative process.

#### PRELIMINARY COMMENT ON PRINCIPLE 7

A full and well-documented illustration of this principle is impeded by the unfortunate lack of histories of administrative action.

A general acquaintance with British social history will, however, readily prompt reminders of the reality of that political and administrative progress, for which it affords a criterion, particularly in such fields as : public health, industrial welfare, education, poor relief, police, local government, liquor control, among many others. Anyone sceptical of the possibility of achieving desirable forms of social transformation by the agency of public administration owes it to himself to study some of the many books recording the development of opinion and action in these spheres during the nineteenth century. Still better would be a glance at the government reports recording the dimensions of these problems at various stages in the last hundred and fifty years and the successive steps taken to deal with them throughout that time.

These examples would be merely a few illustrations taken from the whole wide field of governmental activity which amply demonstrate that life in society to-day is immensely safer, richer and more convenient for everybody than, apart from the effects of natural calamities and wars, it has ever been in the past. Many other examples could be chosen such as the control by public health standards of food and drink, control of the sale of poisons, control over the means of transport by road, rail and sea, the disposal of sewage, the provision of water, improvements in prison administration and in the fire-fighting services.

Administrative action has successfully removed the political controversies which raged, sometimes with great bitterness over several generations, as to whether it was legitimate by political means to establish administrative machinery to cope with the social evils represented by such phenomena as a semi-illiterate population, unrelieved poverty, squalor and want, rampant drunkenness and its attendant ruin, uncontrolled lawlessness, riot, theft and murder. Our ancestors endured all these evils and nothing but the tremendous misery, discomfort and loss flowing from them forced political attention to concentrate upon them.

At the end of the eighteenth century and during the first quarter of the nineteenth century, little or nothing had been done to cope with a formidable catalogue of pressing social problems. The entire administrative force serving the country in 1832 was not more than about 20,000 men serving a population of about 24 millions and three-quarters of them were revenue collecting officials. English society was then most imper-

fectly organized to deal with very many of the social objectives which we to-day regard as of the first urgency and importance. In 1939 the Civil Service numbered about 400,000 men and women to serve a population nearly twice as large (46 millions). With what consternation would our ancestors have contemplated such a contrast! Herbert Spencer would have been forced to admit that, despite the vehemence and pungency of his warnings, his message had been ignored. Voluntary co-operation and the system of free contract which he regarded as of the essence of the liberal tradition have more and more been replaced by the system of compulsory co-operation which he feared and detested. More and more activities have been assigned to public administration and there is no sign that the tendency is likely to be reversed. Education, poor relief, police, electricity supply, broadcasting, with many other activities, have been largely removed from the sphere of exclusive voluntary, private, or uncontrolled commercial exploitation. Abroad the same tendency is observable. In May, 1945, the head of the French State announced that coal mining and electricity supply would be "nationalized."

Seen in Herbert Spencer's terms, Man has lost his battle *versus* the State. But Herbert Spencer was begging a very big question when he framed that particular antithesis. In his day it should have been possible to see that it was senseless to put in terms of opposition and combat, a relationship which is essentially one of self-help and co-operative effort through a better and more intelligently planned division of labour for recognized public purposes. Many people saw that co-operation rather than conflict was the real point at issue. Matthew Arnold was among them and from their beliefs the social-service State of our own day was to become a reality.

Echoes of these old battles are still to be heard. People can still be found to crusade against the sapping of individual initiative, the decay of private enterprise, the regimentation of mankind; in a word, against the totalitarian State. Such obvious evils are not likely to remain unchallenged for many will strive to combat them at all costs. But the battle against them will not be won by abolishing the police force, closing the publicly provided schools, withdrawing His Majesty's inspectors from factories, mines, workshops and merchant vessels, putting such services as the fire service on a contract basis; in short, by putting the clock back one hundred and fifty years. If this is so it is difficult to discover any obvious reasons for supposing that the extension of the principle that public necessities should be publicly administered is essentially bad in itself. Why, if a national grid for electricity supply has proved itself an untold blessing in thousands of villages, towns and remote country areas should it be unreasonable to enquire if similar benefits may be



expected from a nationally planned water or gas system? Why has it been a heresy rewarded by the harshest sentence of political excommunication to advocate consideration for a similar nationally planned programme for the more efficient extraction of Britain's resources in coal or water-power? The debate between upholders of planned direction and those who believe that unregulated competition is the most powerful known engine of social transformation is only in part an administrative question but of the importance of that part there should be no doubt.

The opposition to proposed extensions of national or administrative supervision appears to rest to some extent less upon true love of a competitive fight than upon natural inertia and dislike of change fortified by the opposition sure to be forthcoming from the sectional interests whose well-being seems to, and on a short-term view probably may, rest upon the maintenance of traditional procedure. A developed understanding of the principles of public administration would expose the unsoundness of such a position although it is doubtless folly to suppose that the interests threatened would thereupon cease their opposition. For "interests" do not develop from intellectual appreciation of the soundness of abstract principles but from more mundane considerations which find their reflection, not in statements of national income and expenditure but in company profit and loss statements and in the pass books of private banking accounts.

The principle refers to administration as subject to the rule of law and as being an automatic component of the machinery of government, possessing mass and momentum. By this is meant the apparent though imperfectly recognized fact that an increasing share of what is called the government of a country is left to public administration. Such is the strength of the traditional view that evidence of surprise occasionally accompanies a statement of the fact, even in well-informed quarters. Commenting upon the political situation after the announcement in May, 1945, that a general election would be held early in the following July, the *Economist* [of May 26th, 1945] stated "It is, in fact very difficult to believe that a clear majority, for either one [party] would make very much difference. A few superficialities, no doubt, would be painted in different colours, but in the main the country will be ruled in exactly the same way, by the Civil Service, whichever side wins."

If instead of the word "ruled" in this context, "administered" were used, the statement would have been more accurate and considerably less surprising. The word "rule" is, in fact, derived from the political concept of sovereignty which controversy over the Divine Right of Kings made popular and which, ghostlike, still survives to infect public administration. A "ruler" is still associated in too many minds with the picture of a superman holding orb and sceptre

whose lightest word is instantly obeyed, for it to be readily applicable to the Civil Service of the United Kingdom. The real "ruler" of England, that mystical entity which has sent many people who ought to have known better on wild-goose chases for this or that personality, asking whether he be perhaps the Secretary of the Treasury or the Secretary of the Cabinet, is no creature of flesh and blood, but an abstraction called the Law. The Rule of Law is no mere formula but a very present reality commanding civil servants and citizens with equal force. Englishmen who secured the foundations for the rule of law when they won the great Charter from King John in 1215 A.D. have not been idle since. In seven centuries the law has undoubtedly expanded enormously as new needs and new problems demand that it should. But there it is, severe and majestic for all to discover if they will make the necessary effort. The tremendous importance of the Rule of Law as a principle of Government can hardly be overstressed in a work on public administration. It was well described by R. G. Collingwood ["The New Leviathan," 1942, p. 332]: "Law and Order mean strength. Men who respect the rule of law are by daily exercise building up the strength of their own wills; becoming more and more capable of mastering themselves and other men and the world of nature. They are becoming daily more and more able to control their own desires and passions and to crush all opposition to the carrying out of their intentions. They are becoming day by day less liable to be bullied or threatened or cajoled or frightened into courses they would not adopt of their own free will by men who would drive them into doing things in the only way in which men can drive others into doing things; by arousing in them passions or desires or appetites they cannot control."

Instead, therefore, of talking what may be dangerously near nonsense about the Civil Service "ruling" the country or more stupidly bewailing the "decay" of politics and the rising importance of "mere administration," it would be much more to the point to get a clearer picture of the contribution which may be expected to public welfare from politics and administration, singly and in combination.

The mass and momentum of administration has increased, is increasing and should be diminished only when by doing so public welfare is advanced. If there is an engine of government, the administrative side of it is like a flywheel which maintains as far as possible the constant and even rotation of the mechanism. As the flywheel becomes more massive and rotates the faster, so is its influence greater and more enduring. But it still needs the motive force of the political engine to set it going and to sustain its operation. It is never a perpetual-motion machine of the type which the *Economist* extract aboveleaf might lead a careless reader to suppose.

The central truths to which this principle points can be regarded as a natural expansion of the principle of the social necessity of public administration [principle 3]. They further vindicate public administration from the charge currently made, or assumed without argument to be valid, that the expenditure it entails is a drag upon the productive energies of the society on whose behalf it operates. The need for caution in criticizing public administration on the grounds of its rising cost is stated in 7.08.

Of course the nature of the tasks may be called in question but this involves a political, not an administrative judgment. Critics of administrative arrangements must be sure, therefore, that they do not unthinkingly transfer to the administrative machinery odium they feel on political grounds. To do so would be no more intelligent than to blame the horses when a farmer failed to make a success of his farm.

"Atmosphere," that mysterious quality already spoken of, finds its place in this principle as an invariable accompaniment of co-operative effort on a common problem over a series of years. "Atmosphere" is a large element in administrative style and as such it has a diffuse, elusive yet undoubtedly pervasive influence throughout administrative organizations. "Atmosphere" also extends in various directions, some of which have been hinted at as they arise from contact with the "consumers" of administration, the public, on whose behalf administration is carried on.

There are other aspects of administrative "atmosphere" issuing in more concrete forms which demand consideration. Their full exposition would require an extensive review of what is usually called "institutional psychology." Such a study examines the morale, the discipline and habits of organizations, the force which such influences exert upon the behaviour and also upon the characters of their members, the tenacity with which characteristics, so acquired, remain throughout life and endure to survive reforms and reorganizations of the institutions concerned. Allied with such a factor are the irrational, inconsistent and illogical beliefs and practices which can often be detected in an organization with a long history. Reference to some of the more extreme of these aspects of the problem will be made in the succeeding chapter upon the occupational diseases of Public Administration.

## 8. Principle of Research

8. The progress of public administration, in so far as it is not promoted automatically by political activity or self-generated, will be contingent upon the advance of human knowledge in the whole field of social science or of sociology.

8.01 Provision should be made for research in the social sciences

[outside public administration] to advance the knowledge of public administration in all its aspects.

8.02. Administrative foresight and planning should be recognized as a function of public administration and provision made to pursue it departmentally as well as generally [8.01].

8.03. Research includes the systematic study and recording of new methods, devices and techniques in public administration.

8.04. Research includes the organization and application of research and the development of skill in its utilization.

#### PRELIMINARY COMMENT ON PRINCIPLE 8

With this cautionary statement, the analysis of the principles of public administration may conclude. It provides a desirable reminder of the tentative formulation of the principles given above and of the extent to which progress in their more scientific restatement and enlargement is conditional upon sociological progress generally.

The expectation of and urgent plea for further thought and reflection upon the subject is a fitting note upon which to end the conceptual analysis of administrative principles, methods and forms. It is by no means a novel plea.

"It is one business to do what must be done," said Sir Henry Taylor in 1886, "another to devise what ought to be done. It is in the spirit of the British Government, as hitherto existing, to transact only the former business; and the reform which it requires is to enlarge that spirit so as to include the latter."

Nearly one hundred years later the Haldane Report of the Machinery of Government Committee (one of the classic documents in the literature of public administration) declared that "further provision is needed in the sphere of civil government for the continuous acquisition of knowledge and the prosecution of research, in order to furnish a proper basis for policy."

It does not yet seem likely that enough will be done to meet the need which has been so long and so emphatically stated. Nor is it probable that the demand could ever be completely met. Students of public administration as of all other subjects hope naturally enough to surge forward on the wave of the future to ever new horizons, but at present many of them feel that they are far behind the crest of that wave.

This principle draws attention therefore to the desirability of devoting conscious effort to organizing the quest for this new knowledge. It was seen in the discussion of principle 5 that in public administration, as in other ways of life, things will not get done unless it is made somebody's duty to do them. Despite the biting sarcasm of "Gulliver's Travels" at the expense of inventors or projectors, we have seen abun-

dantly in our own day that it is possible to organize and specialize in invention as it is in anything else. Until the creative human spirit falls back exhausted there is always point in demanding inventions from it.

Few administrators worth their salt would be content to rest, for instance, under the gibe recently uttered, no doubt with full consciousness of many historical incidents supporting it, by the great Italian philosopher Benedetto Croce. Distinguishing between the work of history as a perpetual creation of new life, ever forming new equilibria, and the work of the technicians, conservators or administrators seeking to maintain the equilibria so created, he credits the politicians with all the intuition, decision and courage and regards the administrators as fossilizers or at best machine-minders content if only they can keep the wheels ticking over. The distinction between the two types of mind may be admitted without, however, agreeing that administrators may safely lack intuition, decision, and courage. Modern public administration calls for such qualities in large measure and the demand is, unfortunately, very considerably in excess of the supply, not merely in administration but in politics and business as well. The need will be evident from the analysis of the nature of public administration provided in the preceding principles from which it is clearly apparent that very much depends upon the energy and initiative of public servants. Mere automata or docile performers of an allotted duty would never be adequate for the complex tasks now involved in public administration.

One practical effect of the application of this principle might be seen in the improvement, expansion and greater utilization of departmental libraries. "What chiefly struck me about the Civil Service," a distinguished temporary civil servant is reported to have said shortly after he had exchanged a University Chair for a war job in 1940, "is that civil servants do not read or keep up to date with the literature of their subject." On the whole it is a charge which it is not easy to rebut. How many civil servants or local government officials know anything, for example, about the similar problems and activities in their own field of foreign government departments or of the state of public administration abroad? No country has in recent years devoted so much attention to, or published so much material on, public administration as has the United States. The Federal Departments in Washington are generous in distributing official publications and press statements about their work. Yet how many British civil servants are aware of American methods of dealing administratively with the social problems confronting a vast modern State? Political and social conditions are no doubt not quite the same in the U.S.A. as they are in England. It would in itself be a useful exercise in administrative thought to try to understand these differences and the reasons for them.

"Where shall wisdom be found?" was a question quoted earlier in this work. One way in which it may emerge is from the discovery and study of differences. A contrast is often an excellent method of sharpening wits, and while it may be untrue to say that there is no knowledge without the perception and contrast of differences, it is nevertheless probable that wisdom will not readily arise in their absence.

The lack of good departmental libraries, and the inadequate use of what few there are, remain as lamentable a reality to-day as a hundred years ago. In a series of letters on public administration to *The Spectator*, Arthur Symonds wrote on April 24th, 1848, pointing out the almost total lack of library resources in the Whitehall of that day, saying that:—

"It is all very well to adhere to current practice to discharge promptly the matters which press for execution; but the Legislator and the Administrator must take a higher and wider range of view: they must be informed even of the notions which have existence in the Press, for in a notion just started may be discerned the germ of a theory that will prevail and they may find in the history of the past an explanation of the present; their motto should be 'respice, circumspice, aspice et prospice'; and though they must needs act in accordance with the principles and feelings that prevail in their time, it should be with such reference to the probabilities and even the possibilities of the future, that their present measure may not encounter overthrow by the force of an unexpected check. Above all, while they should use their subordinates as instruments, they should not be hindered by them; and that this may not be so, it is necessary that their subordinates should in some degree be imbued with, or at least should appreciate, the spirit by which the statesman should be governed. For this reason, among others, the formation of a Library is important in reference to the humbler official agencies."

This lengthy quotation from a forgotten writer is not given to prove the self-evident truth that a well-informed civil servant is better than an ignorant one, but to show that although the need for library services was completely obvious a hundred years ago, it is doubtful if officials have on the whole, during the intervening hundred years, gone so very far in the direction Symonds clearly hoped that they would. The new emphasis upon post-entry training, born no doubt of the realization that public administration faces huge and difficult new tasks, may aid in making civil servants more "library conscious."

At the same time it must not be forgotten that civil servants, particularly those in the higher ranks of the service, are immersed in so vast a flood of work that if they rarely trouble a library it is because they already have so much to read that it would be a physical impossibility

to try to cram in more. As it is, many of them devote what should be leisure hours of recreation and refreshment to the never-ending task of trying to cope with the mass of typed, duplicated and printed material which is deposited on their desks in the course of a working week. Merely to stay sane and balanced they must, in peace-time at least, have Samuel Johnson's courage and resolutely act on the principle that "no man is obliged to do as much as he can. A man is to have part of his life to himself."

It will be in the early years of a civil servant's career that he may have more time and energy for reading, study and research. What is gained between the years of 20 and 30 is likely to be remembered and become rewardingly useful when in action in later life. It is in these years, moreover, that the habit of study may be lost, so condemning the individual concerned to stunted mental growth with its consequent severe limitations, for the rest of his working life. It is not necessary to be a thorough-going pragmatist to believe that the knowledge really worth having is the knowledge where to look for help when faced with the practical problems of this world. To run over the ground of administrative work and to read in the literature around it in economics, political and legal theory, in philosophy, ethics and sociology will rarely be a waste of time for a young civil servant with ambitions.

A more formal and more difficult problem is to provide practical machinery to pursue the research work which everyone who thinks seriously about administrative problems nearly always recommends. Like the recommendation for "greater efficiency" (see principle 4), or for "better co-ordination" (see principle 5), it is always safe to recommend "more research" since nobody is likely to question the wisdom of having more knowledge. But the practical problem is not to be solved as easily as the simple slogan "more research" may lead people to believe. It is a slogan frequently encountered at the end of a long and involved review of some knotty administrative problems. Sagely to observe that the question under discussion needs "more research" sounds more positive and constructive than the bare conclusion that the writer does not know the full solution of the problem, because the reader is left with the expectation that if a research department is given the problem, before long they will succeed in settling the matter. So, of course, he votes for "more research." When "research" asks for a vote of confidence it always gets it, because in the world of science research has so many striking victories to its credit. But research in administration cannot be carried on under laboratory conditions. Often it cannot be pursued under "field conditions" either because the stuff upon which the civil servant so often would like to research is not a mere molecular aggregate, but human flesh and blood.

More important still, is that administrative problems needing research arise out of human situations demanding instant solutions in the light of practical experience of them. A social worker cannot write down a few lines of formulae and toss it to a "research" man to take away and study. In chemical research the research man can go away with the formula, reconstruct its components in the laboratory, prepare his reagents, light his bunsen burner and "start right in."

Not so the social worker. His experience of men and administration is not something which can be transferred. His problems very often cannot be separated from the context in which he discovers them. The man who needs to do the research is the man with the problem on his hands. He cannot usually call in an outsider who lacks his experience. To do so would risk a solution which the administrator would probably instinctively "feel in his bones" was not the right solution, although he might have a hard job to state his real objections to it.

The explanation seems to lie in the fact that the training and knowledge acquired by the seasoned administrator cannot be had except by treading in his footsteps and leading his life. There is no special mystery about the matter, for in every trade and profession it is only by practice in use that it is possible to develop and refine those reactions in body and mind from which alone real skill can arise. Psychology explains the process when it shows how skills of bodily movement and of mental activity arise from the constantly repeated reception, transmission, co-ordination and subsequent discharge of thousands of impulses through the nervous system. Apart from isolated and occasional examples of true genius, the average man has only one way of acquiring unusual or specially skilled abilities. Fortunately, it is a plain and open way. All that is necessary is to persist in the effort of dealing with all the hundreds of nerve impulses until the cerebro-spinal and autonomic nervous systems become properly attuned and adjusted to the new demands being made upon the organism. This is an abbreviated reference to the underlying verity which an unusual professor adopted as the motto of his treatise on the differential calculus. "What one fool can do, another fool can do." So he can, if he takes sufficient pains, but then he is no longer a fool.

The doctrine that skill is acquired by training nerve paths teaches other lessons. It shows, for example, why there cannot be such a thing as vicarious experience, which is perhaps one of the things Leibniz had in mind when he said that the individual creature (or "monad," as he called it) "had no windows." Individual experience is necessarily unique and it cannot therefore be genuinely shared or transmitted, although imagination no doubt can be trained to come to the aid of that real knowledge which experience alone genuinely provides.



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### CHAPTER III

## OCCUPATIONAL DISEASES AND MERITS OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

THERE is a profound truth in the notion that all specialization, and therefore all professionalism, is bad, simply because of the limits it necessarily imposes upon the full development of the human spirit. The Civil Service is a profession, and civil servants can hardly escape the fate of professional people everywhere. The reference to the psychological basis of special skills at the end of the last chapter supplies an immediate and obvious reason why expert specialized development cannot of itself be a training for the whole man.

Before the fatal fact thus acknowledged is taken too seriously, it is as well to remember at once that professionalism is an inevitable consequence of that grand principle of the division of labour in society on which all social progress and therefore all personal betterment, is founded. *communis error facit ius* said one of our legal maxims (page 14), and where everybody is a victim nobody has special cause for lament or for attack. However, it is as well to know what forms the evils of professionalism may assume in the hope that armed with such knowledge something may be done to avoid them.

Literature is full of attacks on professionalism, indeed, it has provided some of the shrewdest wits of the human race, from Molière to Bernard Shaw, with that opportunity to depict the incongruous and the absurd without which their talents would be largely wasted. Needless to say, civil servants have shared with doctors, priests, lawyers, soldiers, teachers and business men in these attacks. It is impossible, as indeed it should be unnecessary, to illustrate them in detail in a volume such as this and it will be sufficient to draw general attention to the wider problem, allowing the reader to provide from experience and from other books, horrifying instances of professional depravity. To facilitate the process, it will perhaps be useful to borrow or paraphrase some of the dangers of professionalism so trenchantly denounced by Mr. F. H. Hayward in his interesting volume "Professionalism and Originality" [Allen & Unwin, 1917]. They are:—

*Perversity.* Professionalism becomes the enemy of the ends, such as health, justice, education, etc., which it should serve.

*Treason.* Professionalism in mistaken defence of its own procedures opposes the great aims of humanity as a whole. As Molière's doctors said, "un homme mort n'est qu'un homme mort et ne fait point de

conséquence ; mais une formalité négligée porte un notable préjudice à tout le corps des médecins."

In public administration this particular perversity may be shown by examples of official resistance to the introduction of new inventions such as iron ships, screw propellers, the convoy system in wartime, etc.

*Self-seeking.* Professionalism seeks to acquire power, privileges or emoluments for itself.

Here it may be remarked that the charge would be little less true if the word "mankind" were substituted for "professionalism."

*Cultivation of Complexity.* The development and retention of complicated and laborious methods of work, the tendency to create work as a means of maintaining or expanding professional importance.

*Jargon.* Allied with the previous defect and too well satirized in all the comic papers to need illustration.

*Fear of definiteness.* Professionalism opposes the introduction of definition and preciseness because it would thereby admit standards by which it might be judged. If this is true the study of the principles of public administration should be strongly resisted in the Civil Service.

*Hatred of Supervision.* Particularly directions from the usually imperfectly or incompletely informed general public.

*Self Praise.* According to Bergson, vanity merges into solemnity by degrees as the profession develops in the direction of charlatanism.

If this is true, civil servants should presumably adopt the attitude of the Lord Chancellor in Gilbert's comic opera, "Iolanthe" :—

"The law is the true embodiment  
Of everything that's excellent.  
It has no kind of fault or flaw  
And I, my Lords, embody the law."

The defect also results in exaggerated claims being made on behalf of professional achievements in the past.

Fortunately, in England it is rarely the civil servants who claim that the British Civil Service is "the best in the world."

*Secrecy.* Professionalism resists prying eyes.

*Uncreativity.* Improvements mostly come from the laity and are opposed by the professions themselves.

*Abuse of Power.* Professionalism is unchivalrous, tyrannical or cruel towards the weak committed to its care. This remark recalls Lord Acton's words that all power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely.

*Maliginity.* Professionalism wages a war of slander and spite against innovating members of its profession or of the lay public. The accusations take various forms suggesting that the unwelcome innovator is in

some way defective, unpractical, weak, unbalanced, without judgment, that he is ignorant, hasty, or a thief of the ideas of others or that he is animated by despicable motives of self-seeking, self-advertisement or private gain.

On this formidable catalogue it is necessary once more to repeat that neither civil servants alone nor professional men alone have any monopoly of the vices listed in it. The fact can be proved by substituting in most places the words "men and women" for "professionalism." The charges are then mostly still as true as before. It was once said that five minutes after a few intelligent people get talking about current human difficulties and their remedies, they will be found discussing original sin. So true is it that the imperfection of the instrument, which is the ordinary man and woman, limits the scope and effectiveness of all human endeavour, public administration included. To state this platitude is necessary because of the aura of majesty which still seems to surround governmental activities in many people's eyes. The Divine Right of Kings is no longer a political doctrine commanding interest, let alone support. Nevertheless, there is a certain reverence towards the State still to be detected in some people's attitudes which seems a hangover from the days when men might be executed for ridiculing that doctrine. Perhaps public awareness of the care and responsibility of public officials helps to maintain this attitude of deference to official pronouncements and to that extent the attitude is more than a "hangover." In any event it is foolish to expect civil servants to be a race of supermen, although much complaint about Service activities seems the result of disappointment due to just such illusions.

Some of the specific criticisms which have been made against the Civil Service certainly are not based upon such assumptions. Of the unreformed Civil Service in the middle of the nineteenth century, Sir Charles Trevelyan and Sir Stafford Northcote, in their "Report on the Organization of the Permanent Civil Service," dated November 23rd, 1853, wrote as though it were staffed with "those whose abilities do not warrant an expectation that they will succeed in the open professions, where they must encounter the competition of their contemporaries, and those whom indolence of temperament or physical infirmities unfit them for active exertions."

The system of restricting entry to the Civil Service to those who succeed in passing severe competitive tests which Sir George Trevelyan so energetically championed, has successfully removed any fears that civil servants would be unable to meet the competition of their contemporaries since it is only by reason of their success in such competition that they now become civil servants. Nevertheless, critics find that the state of the Civil Service still is not all it should be. An official committee,

reporting in 1944 upon the training of civil servants, summed up the position in our own time in the following words :—

“ While the defects commonly attributed to it are not the monopoly of the Civil Service, it may be that the conditions of the public service tend to foster particular weaknesses and to throw the limelight of publicity upon them to a greater degree than elsewhere. The faults most frequently enumerated are over-devotion to precedent ; remoteness from the rest of the community, inaccessibility, and faulty handling of the general public ; lack of initiative and imagination ; ineffective organization and misuse of man-power ; procrastination and unwillingness to take responsibility or to give decisions.” The Committee’s conclusion, after this depressing review, was that “ we recognize that these defects exist in some measure—though not so generally or in such degree as is often alleged—and whether they derive from the individual or the system, post-entry training must be directed to eliminating them.”

This statement is sober in comparison with the wild words of a noble lord who told his fellow peers in 1942 that the Civil Service “ is really a seething mass of well-trained gentlemen grabbing for power ” and that he knew of nothing worth while they had done since the war began. Such uninformed accusations frequently occur and it will be sufficient to give this one example in contrast to the previously quoted thoughtful comment by experienced people on the official committee to dispose of them all.

Reference to the statement of the principles of public administration will both help to explain how the imperfections and shortcomings of civil servants arise as well as to demonstrate why they must be combated. Devotion to precedent, for example, is the outcome of exaggerated attention to the second principle [of official responsibility]. Subsequent principles show both why and how it is to be attacked. Inadequate contact with the public means that civil servants shelter too much behind the first principle and neglect unduly the sixth. Lack of initiative and imagination are personal shortcomings which are contrary to the spirit of the fourth principle ; ineffective organization implies imperfect understanding and application of the principles of organization contained in the fifth principle.

It would be simple to extend the list of possible defects of public administration by selecting examples showing administrative activities running counter to the spirit of each of the eight principles in turn. A few such examples are sufficient to illustrate the point at issue. One amusing skit on certain Civil Service failings from the last century may serve as a specimen of the humorous treatment of certain less pleasant features of the Civil Service and as a reminder of the bitterness engendered

in the prolonged battle of the postal workers for a living wage. The harsh fate of the tens of thousands of poorly paid postmen and sorters deserves a record to show how mean an employer the State can be.

The following sally was reprinted by Mr. G. W. E. Russell in his entertaining volume issued anonymously as "Collections and Recollections by one who has kept a Diary, 1898." Here it is with Mr. Russell's preface :—

"I hope that an unknown author, whose skill in reproducing an archaic style I heartily admire, will forgive me for quoting the following narrative of certain doings decreed by the General Post Office on the occasion of the Jubilee of the Penny Post. Like all that is truly good in literature, it will be seen that this narrative was not for its own time alone, but for the future, and has its relevancy to events of the present day :—

'1. Now it came to pass in the month June of the Post-office Jubilee, that Raikes, the Postmaster-General, said to himself, Lo ! an opening whereby I may find grace in the sight of the Queen !

'2. And Raikes appointed an Executive Committee; and Baines, the Inspector-General of Mails, made he Chairman.

'3. He called also Cardin, the Receiver and Accountant-General; Preece, Lord of Lightning; Thompson, the Secretarial Officer; and Tombs, the Controller.

'4. Then did these four send to the Heads of Departments, the Postmasters and Sub-Postmasters, the Letter Receivers, the Clerks-in-Charge, the Postal Officers, the Telegraphists, the Sorters, the Postmen; yea, from the lowest even unto the highest sent they out.

'5. And the word of Baines and of them that were with him went forth that the Jubilee should be kept by a conversazione at the South Kensington Museum on Wednesday the second day of the month July in the year 1890.

'6. And Victoria the Queen became a patron of the Jubilee Celebration; and her heart was stirred within her; for she said, For three whole years have I not had a Jubilee.

'7. And the word of Baines and of them that were with him went forth again to the Heads of Departments, the Postmasters and Sub-Postmasters, the Letter-Receiver, the Clerks-in-Charge, the Postal Officers and Telegraphists, the Sorters and the Postmen.

'8. Saying unto them, Lo ! the Queen is become Patron of the Rowland Hill Memorial and Benevolent Fund, and of the conversazione in the Museum; and we the Executive Committee bid you, from the lowest even to the highest, to join with us at the tenth hour of the conversazione in a great shouting to praise the name of the Queen our patron.

'9. Each man in his Post Office at the tenth hour shall shout upon her name; and a record thereof shall be sent to us that we may cause its memory to endure for ever.

'10. Then a great fear came upon the Postmasters, the Sub-Postmasters, and the Letter-Receiver, which were bidden to make the record.

'11. For they said, If those over whom we are set in authority shout not at the tenth hour, and we send an evil report, we shall surely perish.

'12. And they besought their men to shout aloud at the tenth hour, lest a worse thing should befall.

'13. And they that were of the tribes of Nob and of Snob rejoiced with an exceeding great joy, and did shout with their whole might; so that their voices became as the voices of them that sell tidings in the street at nightfall.

'14. But the Telegraphists and the Sorters and the Postmen, and them that were of the tribes of Rag and of Tag, hardened their hearts, and were silent at the tenth hour; for they said among themselves, "Shall the poor man shout in his poverty, and the hungry celebrate his lack of bread?"



' 15. Now Preece, Lord of Lightning, had wrought with a cord of metal that they who were at the conversazione might hear the shouting from the Post Offices.

' 16. And the tenth hour came; and lo there was no great shout; and the tribes of Nob and Snob were as the voice of men calling in the wilderness.

' 17. Then was the wrath of Baines kindled against the tribes of Rag and Tag for that they had not shouted according to his word; and he commanded that their chief men and counsellors should be cast out of the Queen's Post Office.

' 18. And Raikes, the Postmaster-General, told the Queen all the travail of Baines, the Inspector-General, and of them that were with him, and how they had wrought all for the greater glory of the Queen's name.

' 19. And the Queen hearkened to the word of Raikes, and lifted up Baines to be a Centurion of the Bath; also she placed honours upon Cardin, the Receiver-General and Accountant-General; upon Preece, Lord of Lightning; upon Thompson, the Secretarial Officer; and upon Tombs, the Controller, so that they dazzled the eyes of the tribe of Snob, and were favourably entreated of the sons of Nob.

' 20. And they lived long in the land; and all men said pleasant things unto them.

' 21. But they of Tag and of Rag that had been cast out were utterly forgotten; so that they were fain to cry aloud, saying, "How long, O ye honest and upright in heart, shall Snobs and Nobs be rulers over us, seeing that they are but men like unto us, though they imagine us in their hearts to be otherwise?"

' 22. And the answer is not yet."

There is perhaps room for a separate volume on the pathology of public administration. It would be a volume to which many would eagerly contribute because apart from occasional unpleasant experiences, everyone sooner or later hears of instances of official incompetence or inadequacy. Many of the stories make painful reading, particularly to the civil servants, who are many, with a keen desire to do a good job. Such a pathological survey would no doubt contain stories like the following, printed in the *Evening Standard* on September 29th, 1945, a reminder of the days when an exit permit was necessary for travel abroad.

#### THE STORY OF THE MAN WHO WANTED A PASSPORT *Evening Standard* Reporter

This is the story of how a man, invited to Sweden to judge two livestock shows, got his passport.

The Passport Office said his visit had to be sponsored by a Government department, and suggested the Ministry of Agriculture.

The Ministry, while approving his visit, could not sponsor it. They suggested he ask the Department of Overseas Trade. The D.O.T. deftly returned him to the Ministry of Agriculture.

He went back to the Passport Office. After a long wait he got near the head of the queue; then the office closed for the day. Next morning he was there early. He saw the head of the section, who gave him some forms to fill in and asked for two photographs signed by a solicitor. Back he went again next morning. "Try the Home Office now," he was advised.

At the Home Office he found himself in a room crowded with people all waiting to see one official. They sat on chairs, and as each one departed the whole crowd shuffled up one chair.

After one and a half hours the passport seeker was at the head of the queue—only he was advised to try the Foreign Office.

There he was told to make a written application. He did. Three days later he was told the Foreign Office could not sponsor his visit.

Back at the Passport Office he was told to return a week later. He did. He was informed no passport could be issued.

He went back to the Home Office, who sent him back once more to the Department of Overseas Trade. After a two-hour wait at the Department of Overseas Trade an official announced the department would sponsor the visit—provided the Ministry of Agriculture did not wish to do so. The official telephoned the Ministry, then asked him to return the next day.

He got the permit the next morning, went to the Passport Office. But not till the following day did he get his passport. It involved 15 calls at Government offices. To get a visa it took 15 minutes at the Swedish Legation.

Adequate interdepartmental co-ordination or horizontal correlation was clearly lacking on at least one occasion in the matter of exit permits. Such events may be explained but not excused as an aftermath of war during which all travel abroad was necessarily very strictly controlled.

### OCCUPATIONAL MERITS OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

It is nothing new to hold up to scorn and derision action by civil servants which contravene the spirit of the principles of public administration set out in Chapter II. It is just as important, though less usual, to call attention to the vastly greater number of occasions on which men and women in the British Civil Service loyally carry out their duty and sustain by their efforts the daily activity of the whole vast machinery of government. The plain fact is that the daily labours of half a million or more civil servants fit just about as well as imperfect human nature can, at any specified time, fit all the principles to which administrative activity should conform. These rules are, in fact, more honoured in their observance than by their breach.

It is natural that public administration, like personal health, begins to attract attention only when it is suffering some malaise or breakdown. Fortunately the Registrar-General's returns of sickness and mortality relate to a very small fraction of the public as a whole who enjoy tolerably good health considering the way they live and work. So it is with the Civil Service. The continuing activity of half a million men and women makes a tolerably efficient job of their duty to "run the country."

Just as general public health would undoubtedly be better if people had better food, more rest, recreation and leisure, so the Civil Service would no doubt be more efficient if everybody in it was more intelligent and better trained. It should not be necessary to state so bald a platitude, but without it the proper perspective in which the whole problem of the efficiency and ability of the public service should be viewed seems in danger of being wrongly framed.

The eight principles of public administration, it will be noticed, are all positive, not negative, and they reflect the huge creative enterprise called executive government. The virtues of public administration, if such there be, depend therefore in the first place upon the view taken

of the contribution of executive government to public welfare. In this volume it is assumed throughout to be both positive and real. If anyone is of a contrary opinion it is open to him to state how the country could or should be better without its present apparatus of official agencies and how he conceives that a new and better form of organization for social action can be achieved.

The first occupational merit of public administration is therefore the part it allows the individual to take in a supremely important public task. At its best it can be a good example of the dedicated life. Sir William Beveridge produced a well-known monkish (to which we should add nunnish) analogy, when he said that the civil servant embraced the triple vow of poverty, obedience and anonymity. It may again be recalled, not as a literal parallel between the sophisticated modern age and the centuries of religion, but as a reminder that a life of public service, with its fixed and unexciting material rewards, does not fail to inspire devoted attention to duty or to impart some strength and serenity of mind to those content to pursue it.

*Esprit de corps* and good morale flow from this source but only as long as the service given is real. There is much talk about the need for good morale in every large-scale organization, whether public or private. The Committee on the Training of Civil Servants of 1944, whose report has already been quoted, said that "training plans, to be successful, must pay substantial regard to staff morale," but they did not try to indicate what that substantial regard might actually mean in practice. And they were wise not to pursue the matter on this plane for good morale, like happiness, is an elusive thing. Experience seems to show that it is not to be achieved by planning for it. It arises automatically when it occurs, as a by-product of the operation of the organization as a whole.

The fluctuating morale of an army, in particular, proves how evanescent a factor it can be. Good during advances, it can be weakened during retreat and destroyed by disaster, as the terrifically high initial morale of the German army has twice been destroyed within living memory. So it is in a government department or business organization. When things are going well under inspiring, humane and encouraging leaders, when output is high, when future plans seem promising and effective, co-operation is willingly forthcoming from friendly, active people in other divisions, branches and departments, then morale will be good. If for any reason the reverse is true, then life is full of difficulties and morale sags. The ascending spiral becomes a descending spiral, everyone is "fed up," people want to get out, opportunities in other departments or in the commercial world are eagerly scanned. The grouseurs and the malcontents, who are to be found in almost every large organization,

then begin to be listened to, not with the usual good-humoured tolerance and chaff but with a more serious ear. The situation can be restored, not by "sanctions" against the grouseurs or by the heavy hand of discipline but by remedying the general situation from which the trouble arose.

Good morale cannot be had unless it has its basis in successful activity, but this does not mean that there are no ways of aiding and capitalizing it. A professional attitude towards an activity is one such guardian, preserver and stimulant to morale. The utility of professionalism in this respect has been ably stated by Miss Follett, who [in "*Dynamic Administration*" Ch. VI.] has stressed the fact that professions aim at establishing, maintaining and improving standards in the activities which the professions serve. Their service to society lies in their ability to keep their members up to these standards, to protect the public from people who are unable or unwilling to observe them (the "quacks"), and finally to educate the public to appreciate these standards. This positive contribution of public administration to society is noted in principle 3 [especially 3.02].

If professionalism has its inevitable accompanying "occupational diseases" it has corresponding merits as well, and in these the Civil Service can claim its share. Some of these merits of professionalism have been well stated by Mr. Hayward in the volume from which many of the criticisms given above have also been drawn. He calls attention to the value of professionalism as one of the chief agents by which social heredity is handed down. Secondly, he points to the social need for specialization arising from the inevitable division of labour, a fundamental principle to which attention has more than once been drawn already in this work, and thirdly, he shows how professional skill, by enhancing the individual's self-respect, consequently increases the satisfaction he extracts from life. Like Miss Follett, he also recognizes that professionalism provides standards of performance as well as of conduct which help men to steer their way through life and to be useful members of the community at the same time.

All these merits of professionalism can in greater or less degree be claimed also for the profession of public administration. Because self-praise has already been denounced as one of the defects of professionalism, this theme of the virtues of civil servants is obviously not one upon which civil servants are likely to dwell. But as long as popular discussion of the Civil Service fastens all its attention upon the shortcomings and vices of the Service, it is at least necessary to point to the reverse side of the medal.

In an appreciation of the late Sir H. Llewellyn Smith contributed to *The Times* [September 25th, 1945], Sir William Beveridge touched upon

some of the qualities which an able civil servant is able to devote to the public service: "Superhuman industry," "speed" and "resourcefulness in tackling new problems." "To see him at work," wrote Sir W. Beveridge, "was a liberal education in the art of Civil Service administration, which, whatever ignorant critics may say to the contrary, is an art of getting things done, by consultation, and conciliation by anticipating and answering objections, by never leaving any ends loose. Llewellyn Smith had one of the most constructive practical minds that can ever have served the country; he was in himself the most convincing refutation of the common idea that all the initiative in affairs comes from Ministers, and that none comes from the civil servants."

Civil servants, such as Sir H. Llewellyn Smith, like every other member of society, whether they be bricklayers or railway staff, doctors or pilots in the Royal Air Force, find enduring satisfaction from their profession or calling, not by consciously trying to list the special virtues it promotes in them, but in the contemplation of the effective organization and management of the great society in which they live and to which they contribute.

#### SELECTED LIST OF BOOKS AND PERIODICAL ARTICLES ILLUSTRATING CHAPTER III

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" Man *versus* the State. London.

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## CHAPTER IV

### BUREAUCRACY, TRUTH OR BOGEY?

THE word "bureaucracy" has been encountered already [Principle 2.04], where it was said to be applicable to any departments or agencies of the government which seek to achieve ends of their own devising rather than those defined for them by the legislative machinery of government. To this notion should now be added the further charge of attempting to usurp judicial power by acting as judges in their own cause. Formal definitions of words like "bureaucracy," "imperialism," "socialism," "communism" and others in the field of politics are unfortunately of little practical value since they are rarely employed in any strict, scientific or logically precise way. Over and above their restricted meaning they have acquired colour and power as emotion-raisers or battle-cries and, in the expressive American phrase, as "smear words"—mere bludgeons with which to strike at political opposition.

It would be difficult to discover a civil servant or any serious critic who thought that "bureaucracy" in its strict sense could be applied to a British Government Department. Yet the word is still bandied about. "Bureaucracy Triumphant" and "The New Despotism" are titles of two books not by sensational journalists but by a prominent K.C. and by a former Lord Chief Justice. The contrast between the Civil Service point of view and that of these eminent lawyers is surprising. When their books are examined it will be found, however, that these two distinguished writers are delivering no root and branch attack against Public Administration as such, neither are they denying the value of the contribution made by the Civil Service to the general ease and convenience of life in modern society. Their fury is aroused by one special manifestation of its activities, namely, the use which the Civil Service has been making, on an admittedly increasing scale in recent years, of the power delegated to it by Parliament to draw up rules and orders in the execution of some Act of Parliament.

The practice of giving the executive general instructions over a wide field of social activity and leaving it to adjust their application in detail, now extends to very many minor and some highly important subjects, whether they be the administration of gas works, water works and electricity undertakings, tramways, railways or national health insurance, workmen's compensation, and so on. How vast the total volume of such orders can be in any one year, can be seen in the annual volume of them and in the periodical indexes to them published by the Stationery Office. They have been a natural growth and, unless the executive arm of govern-

ment is suddenly to become fossilized, they are certainly destined to become much more numerous. Parliament, in other words, instead of trying itself to provide all the subordinate rules and regulations which the proper enforcement of an Act of Parliament would require, must leave the work to the Minister of the Crown who is in charge of executive duties arising when the Act of Parliament is passed. To the extent that Parliament does this, it delegates its powers to the executive. It is equivalent to saying to the executive "you can make laws."

### KINDS OF LAW

English Law, it was said long ago, consists of unwritten, customary or Common Law and written law. There are three kinds of written law : (a) the very small amount declared to be law by the Crown in the exercise of what remains of the royal prerogative ; (b) the most significant and important part made by the King in Parliament which is Statute Law or Acts of Parliament ; and lastly (c) the bulkiest part which is made by government departments and other authorities to whom the King in Parliament has, by Act of Parliament, entrusted legislative power. These authorities are in the majority of cases Ministers in charge of government departments.

Such delegation has not in the past proceeded upon any systematic plan. The Acts of Parliament authorizing the delegation variously prescribe that "regulations," "rules," "orders," "warrants," "minutes," "schemes," "by-laws" may be "made" or approved under conditions which the Acts prescribe.

### EXECUTIVE RULES

Some of these regulations are accurately described as delegated *legislation*. Some of them, however, despite their legislative form or appearance, are ordinary executive pronouncements, statements of practice and procedure which the Minister has authority to make in the ordinary discharge of his duties. Such expression of the statutory powers possessed by the executive independently of any legislative activity in which it may indulge, were listed as follows by the Committee on Ministers' Powers in their Report in 1932. [Cmd. 4060].

1. The power to issue a particular command :

*E.g.*, the power of the Minister of Health under the Public Health Act, 1875, to order a sewer to be made at the expense of a defaulting County Borough Council.

2. The power to license :

*E.g.*, the power of the Home Secretary under the Cruelty to Animals Act, 1876, to license a person to practise vivisection.

3. The power to remit a penalty :  
*E.g.*, the power of His Majesty under the Remission of Penalties Act, 1875, to remit a penalty under the Sunday Observance Act, 1870.
4. The power to inspect :  
*E.g.* (a) the power of an inspector under the Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, to inspect a factory ;  
 (b) the power of two persons appointed by the workmen employed in a mine under the Coal Mines Act, 1911, to inspect a mine.
5. The power to enquire :  
*E.g.*, the power of the Minister of Transport under the Regulation of Railways Act, 1871, to enquire into the cause of a railway accident.

It is important to note, in passing, how these administrative powers, although not legislative, nevertheless all depend upon legislative authority, so illustrating principle 1 in Chapter II.

#### EXECUTIVE LEGISLATION

Delegated legislation has a wider scope than the authorization of these more or less routine functions. It takes the form of statutory Orders in Council or departmental regulations. The Order in Council is a reminder of the days when rules and regulations were made by the King in Council. To-day they are prepared by government departments responsible for their subject matter but are issued not in the name of the department concerned but on the authority of an Order signed by the King in a Privy Council and countersigned by three or more Privy Councillors.

The Committee on Ministers' Powers pointed out that, save in exceptional cases, delegated legislation cannot confer power to legislate upon matters of principle, to impose taxation, or to amend any Act of Parliament. Such positive powers as may be conferred by delegated legislation must be clearly defined, plainly known therefore to Parliament, the executive and to the public, and readily enforceable by the Judiciary. Such requirements are clearly in conformity with the first and second Principles of Public Administration [see Chapter II, especially 1.07, 1.08].

If all these limiting conditions are observed there should plainly be little scope for abuse and consequently little or no ground for complaint about the growing power of the executive. Nevertheless, loud complaints have arisen, and they are not yet silenced.

#### EXECUTIVE "LEGISLATION" ON MATTERS OF PRINCIPLE

The Committee quoted several examples of this unusual delegation of powers. A striking instance of the delegation by Parliament of power



to legislate on principles was extracted from subsection 1 of Section 136 of the Poor Law Act of 1930, which provided :—

“ For executing the powers given to him by this Act, the Minister (of Health) shall make such rules, orders and regulations as he may think fit for

(a) The management of the poor.”

Such authority was first given to the Poor Law Commissioners in 1834, and it has been on the Statute Book in one form or another ever since. If England had been the bureaucrat's paradise which popular journalism occasionally likes to depict, we might have seen some extraordinary consequences of a provision so loosely framed as this. Presumably, statutory regulations might have been made under it confining the poor to concentration camps, compelling them to wear yellow armlets, or allowing the bureaucrats to use them as slave labour in their own houses or in the factories of their friends. The fact that no Minister of Health thought fit to give free scope to his imagination in exploiting possibilities so freely put within his grasp may not prove that delegated legislation is never abused by the executive in England, but it at least shows that there are differences in the methods of public administration of Great Britain and Nazi Germany. In England “ the management of the poor ” has been thought of upon matter-of-fact lines and delegated legislative power to deal with it was justified over a hundred years ago by Chadwick, who asked “ Whoever would think of applying to Parliament to say whether four or five ounces of butter was a proper ration in a particular workhouse, or whether the butter should be Dutch or Irish or whether the old women's under-petticoats should be flannel or baize and how wide and how long ? ” Obviously, Parliament could not be expected to deal with such details.

It is perhaps going to the other extreme for Parliament to give little or no indication of the limits it intended to impose upon ministerial or executive discretion. When Parliament leaves matters so vague as it did when it empowered the Minister of Health “ to make such orders, rules and regulations as he may think fit,” it is hardly justice to blame the executive if it is forced to shape a policy in the light of such native wisdom and expert knowledge as it is able to bring to bear upon the problem. In greater or lesser degree the executive is in fact very often faced with precisely this problem of devising a policy to guide its officials in undertaking duties which Parliament has told them, in general and often vague language, to pursue.

It is a natural result of the greater or lesser attention Parliament chooses or is able to pay to details upon all and every legislative occasion. It would not be surprising if there were occasional slips and imperfections.

Parliament must in effect say to the executive what one of Plato's speakers in his book on *The Laws* [770] said :—

“ Let this be our language to them : Friends and preservers of the law, there will be a host of omissions in the different departments of our present legislation ; that is simply not to be helped. Not but what we shall do all we can to sketch the outlines of the more considerable departments as well as of the whole system. But you will have to fill up this outline and must be told what your aim in doing so is to be.”

#### FORM OF PUBLICATION

An integral part of the aim must be the production of intelligible rules and orders. The legal form in which they are necessarily published can at times provoke some strange documents. When, during the war, the regulations governing the use of tinplate, a metal in short supply, were to be amended to permit its use in tobacco tins, other than of the cutter-lid type, it was announced to the world in the following terms as Statutory Rule and Order No. 1216/1943.

“ 1. The Control of Tins Cans Kegs Drums and Packaging Pails (No. 5) Order, 1942 (*a*), as varied by the Control of Tins Cans Kegs Drums and Packaging Pails (No. 6) Order, 1942 (*b*), the Control of Tins Cans Kegs Drums and Packaging Pails (No. 7) Order, 1942 (*c*), the Control of Tins Cans Kegs Drums and Packaging Pails (No. 8) Order, 1942 (*d*), and the Control of Tins Cans Kegs Drums and Packaging Pails (No. 9) Order, 1942 (*e*), is hereby further varied in the Third Schedule thereto (which is printed at p. 2 of the printed (No. 6) Order), in ‘ Part II. Commodities other than Food,’ by substituting for the reference ‘ 2A ’ therein, the reference ‘ 2A(1) ’ ; and by deleting therefrom the reference ‘ 2B ’ .”

“ 2. This Order shall come into force on the 25th day of August, 1943 ; and may be cited as the Control of Tins Cans Kegs Drums and Packaging Pails (No. 10) Order, 1943, and this Order and the Control of Tins Cans Kegs Drums and Packaging Pails (Nos. 5-9) Orders, 1942, may be cited together as the Control of Tins Cans Kegs Drums and Packaging Pails (Nos. 5-10) Orders, 1942-3.”

Such a document is by no means unusual in the fields where detailed adjustments have to be made in fixing the uses to which scarce materials may be put in wartime. Fortunately such orders were usually accompanied by explanatory memoranda, otherwise it would clearly involve considerable research in order to give them any meaning. “ Legislation by reference,” as such language is described, has naturally encountered acid comment.

Possibly with a little more attention to the mechanics of law making hybrid documents of the above type can in future be reduced to more orderly form.

### EXECUTIVE "LEGISLATION" IMPOSING TAXATION

No action by the executive will be considered more clean contrary to English constitutional law and practice than to allow the executive to make its own arrangements for acquiring revenue otherwise than by a Parliamentary Vote. John Hampden and his parliamentary colleagues would have fought in vain if their work were to be undone quietly and surreptitiously three hundred years later by scheming servants of the Crown managing a machinery of executive government so vast that it would have been inconceivable in the seventeenth century.

Such, however, are the complexities of modern government that it is a fact that to a limited and strictly controlled extent the executive has been entrusted with the power of varying certain financial provisions approved by Parliament. One fairly obvious defence for such procedure is available when it is desired to fashion a flexible tariff system to regulate imports. To depend upon Parliament being willing or able to find time for a new Import Duties Act whenever particular amendments to the tariff are wanted would make flexibility impossible. In passing, the Import Duties Act of 1932, therefore, Parliament gave the executive powers to devise additional exemptions to the general 10 per cent. *ad valorem* customs duty, which it imposed on all imports into the United Kingdom. Furthermore, the Treasury was empowered after consultation with the appropriate department to make an order imposing additional duties having regard to the advisability in the national interest of restricting imports into the United Kingdom and in the interests generally of trade and industry in the United Kingdom. An Import Duties Advisory Committee was created under the Act, which clearly marks a most important stage in the development of administrative technique in this country. Tariffs involve private interests very deeply and it is obvious that important pressures might be generated to utilize tariff flexibility for private gain at public expense. Somebody in the world of government must therefore ensure justice in administering tariff provisions and Parliament, in its wisdom, decided that the executive machinery of Public Administration would be adequate to the task.

The delegation of powers to impose taxation has other illustrations but the majority of them arise from emergency or crisis conditions; from periods, that is to say, when immediate strengthening of executive authority is essential in the national interest.

These crises may arise from the simple need to defend an imperilled national economy such as occurred in the autumn of 1931 when world-

wide monetary dislocation following upon the sensational economic depression in the United States drove Great Britain off the gold standard. The following Acts of Parliament were then passed, all conferring temporary and limited emergency financial powers upon the executive: The Gold Standard (Amendment) Act, 1931, the National Economy Act, 1931, the Foodstuffs (Prevention of Exploitation) Act, 1931, the Abnormal Importations (Customs Duties) Act, 1931, and the Horticultural Products (Emergency Customs Duties) Act, 1931.

Emergency legislation resulting from the more recent and far more perilous crisis caused by the war with Germany of 1939 to 1945, would require a special study in itself. Never before in history has the executive government exercised more far-reaching or more drastic control over the lives, labour and property of English men and women. This period cannot, however, because of the very abnormality of the circumstances which occasioned it, be regarded as providing materials for the fashioning of an administrative code capable of application in normal times.

#### EXECUTIVE LEGISLATION AMENDING ACTS OF PARLIAMENT

Here, again, if the supremacy of Parliament means anything in English constitutional law, it may be asked how it is possible to allow the executive to alter the texts of Acts of Parliament? Just as the exclusive power to impose taxation seemed won for Parliament for ever after the Civil War between King and Parliament in the seventeenth century, so the supremacy of Parliament seemed assured after the glorious Revolution of 1688 had deprived the Crown of that power to dispense or suspend the operation of the law which the last of the Stuarts had sought to retain among his dwindling prerogatives and to use in favour of his Roman Catholic friends.

To find any parallel between present-day authority possessed by certain Ministers of the Crown to vary the text of Acts of Parliament, indignant critics have gone back to the infamous Statute of Proclamations of 1539, according to which the most despotic of the Tudors compelled a subservient Parliament to regard his Royal Proclamation as having the force of law. When this Statute was repealed on the death of Henry VIII in 1547 it went never to be revived.

Between 1888 and 1929, however, it is true that nine Acts of Parliament were passed containing clauses permitting Ministers to modify their provisions so far as might appear to them to be necessary in order to bring the Act into operation. These Acts were the Local Government Act, 1888, Part VI (section 108); the Local Government Act, 1894, Part V (section 80); the Metropolitan Water Act, 1902 (section 51); the National Insurance Act, 1911 (section 78); the Education (Scotland) Act, 1918 (section 26); the Unemployment Insurance Act, 1920 (section

45); the Widows, Orphans and Old Age Contributory Pensions Act, 1925 (section 36); the Rating and Valuation Act, 1925 (section 67); and the Local Government Act, 1929 (Part VIII, section 130).

The following clause appearing in these Acts has been christened "the Henry VIII clause" by indignant critics:—

"If any difficulty arises in connection with the application of this Act to any exceptional area, or in bringing into operation any of the provisions of this Act, the Minister may make such order for removing the difficulty as he may judge to be necessary for that purpose and *any such order may modify the provisions of this Act so far as may appear to the Minister necessary for carrying the order into effect.*"

The words in italics have apparently caused some earnest guardians of public liberties to catch their breath. They need not have caused such consternation. In all but one of the Acts (which conferred certain limited powers upon County Councils and not on a Minister), this provision was in force for a strictly limited time. As distinguished authority has put it, such provisions are partly in the nature of an insurance policy devised by the Parliamentary draftsman in case he has overlooked something in preparing the text of the Bill for Parliament.

The comment of the Committee on Ministers' Powers was "The sole purpose of Parliament on the nine occasions when it passed the modern enactments was to enable minor adjustments of its own handiwork to be made for the purpose of fitting its principles into the fabric of existing legislation, general or local, and of meeting cases of hardship to local authorities."

Such a method of procedure is a far cry from Tudor despotism and it is not very plausible, upon such flimsy foundations, to attempt to conjure up the shade of bluff King Hal as a bogeyman to terrorize Englishmen with the thought that their dearly won liberties are again in as perilous a condition as they were four hundred years earlier during the reign of that brutal but effective monarch.

The fact is that when rare use is made of executive regulations or orders to amend the text of a Statute, a resolution confirming the amendment must be passed by both Houses of Parliament.

There is, therefore, a double check against the introduction of the so-called Henry VIII clause. The validity of such a clause was limited in time—perhaps to twelve months only—and it was made subject to the complete safeguard that action taken under it required Parliamentary approval. The first principle of public administration has, therefore, suffered no infraction so far as a result of the delegated legislative powers in the hands of public administration.

## EXECUTIVE LEGISLATION IMMUNE FROM JUDICIAL REVIEW

"The rule of law": in that grand phrase is summed up a political ideal which has ruled the hearts and minds of mankind from Plato, Aristotle and Cicero through the centuries until our own day, when the United Nations staked their very existence in the struggle to uphold it against Teutonic fury seeking to put the will of a paranoic Führer in its place.

How, then, can British Acts of Parliament contain a provision about executive orders, as some of them have done, to the effect that :—

"The Minister may confirm the order and the confirmation shall be conclusive evidence that the requirements of this Act have been complied with, and that the order has been duly made and is within the powers of this Act" ?

Such a clause, it has been said, "seems to have been designed with the express purpose of completely and finally excluding all control by the Courts."

In fact the situation is by no means so bad. If the order is consistent with the Act under which it is made, it is no more within the power of the Courts to impugn it than they can impugn the Act itself. If it is inconsistent with the Act then the Courts may clearly intervene, a doctrine finally established by the House of Lords decision in the case of *Minister of Health v. the King (on the Prosecution of Yaffé)* 1931, A.C. 494.

Such seems to be the slender and now shrunken core of the charge that civil servants are seeking to usurp that authority in the State which Englishmen during a thousand years of slow evolution and some exciting epochs of desperate struggle, succeeded in winning for Parliament and Parliament alone. In no single instance has the suspicion of improper motive been successfully fastened upon the Civil Service in the operation of the rules and regulations it is increasingly required by Parliament to frame and execute. Professor Laski summed up the discussion as far as it had proceeded up to May, 1942, by saying "the easy talk of 'conspiracy' and 'bureaucracy triumphant,' in which Lord Hewart and Mr. C. K. Allen have indulged, not only shrank to nothing at the first serious analysis, but revealed the more important fact that administrative law is well settled in the general respect of the public" (*New Statesman*, May 23rd, 1942).

## REMEDIES

The real issue, therefore, is not whether the executive should be allowed to make orders and regulations, but how complete and efficient a control can be devised over such subordinate law-making power.

Reference to the principles of public administration and to the spirit

which their observance should develop within the executive, will prove the most effective remedy against their abuse on the executive or administrative plane of government.

The application of the first and second principles of Public Administration (Chapter II) indicate these general considerations clearly enough. The third principle shows the necessity for delegated legislation if the State is to undertake social action on a large scale.

The sixth principle provides administrative links with public opinion. These links, by adequate schemes of publicity and, what is still more important, by the integration as far as possible of private and public purposes, should be able to ensure public awareness of what is going on. If the interests chiefly affected by the orders which the executive proposes to make under powers delegated to them by Parliament are consulted as far as possible *before* the rules assume final form, then some major possibilities of misunderstanding and conflict should be removed before they have time to do any harm. The words "as far as possible" are necessary in the preceding sentence for reasons which will become apparent in succeeding chapters.

If complete safeguards are to be devised, adjustments on the purely legislative plane cannot be avoided. For it is obvious that trouble can arise solely as a result of Parliament delegating its powers to the executive. If the executive does not know how to use them properly or if it abuses them, the powers should be better defined or withdrawn altogether. Legislative remedies proposed by the Committee on Ministers' Powers were broadly designed to reassure the critics and the timorous that effective means could be found to keep under proper control this device of delegated legislative power, which the Committee plainly declared to be both legitimate and inevitable. The Committee's main proposals were :—

1. Clear meanings should be given to the words "regulation," "rule" and "order."

2. The precise limits of the law-making power which Parliament intends to confer on a Minister should always be expressly defined in clear language by the Statute which confers it. When discretion is conferred, its limits should be defined with equal clearness.

3. The use of the so-called Henry VIII clause conferring power on a Minister to modify the provisions of Acts of Parliament (hitherto limited to such amendments as may appear to him to be necessary for the purpose of bringing the Statute into operation) should be abandoned in all but the most exceptional cases and should not be permitted by Parliament except upon special grounds stated in the Ministerial Memorandum attached to the Bill before it becomes an Act.

The Henry VIII clause should

- (a) never be used except for the sole purpose of bringing an Act into operation ;
  - (b) be subject to a time limit of one year from the passing of the Act.
4. The use of clauses designed to exclude the jurisdiction of the Courts to enquire into the legality of a regulation or Order should be abandoned in all but the most exceptional cases ; the special grounds for any exception should also be stated in the Ministerial Memorandum attached to the Bill.

Parliamentary intention to make such an exemption should be plainly stated, and if it is accepted a period of at least three to six months should be allowed in which it should be possible to challenge such exemption.

5. Improvements should be made in the rules governing the publication of all delegated legislation.

6. The present practice of government departments who consult particular interests affected by proposed new delegated legislation should be extended wherever practicable.

7. The practice should become more general whereby departments should include a note explaining the changes made in the law by their new regulations or order.

8. Except where Parliament requires an affirmative resolution, all regulations required to be laid before Parliament before becoming operative should be open to annulment—not modification—by resolution of either House within 28 days on which the House has sat.

9. Bills presented by Ministers proposing to confer law-making power on any Minister should be accompanied by a Memorandum drawing attention to the power, explaining why it is needed, how it would be exercised if it were conferred and stating what safeguards there would be against its abuse.

10. Both Houses of Parliament should set up a small Standing Committee to consider and report on (a) Bills proposing to confer law-making power on a Minister, and also on (b) every regulation and rule made in the exercise of delegated legislative power and laid before the House in pursuance of statutory requirements.

11. Departments and the Treasury should study ways and means of ensuring the highest standards in drafting delegated legislation.

Such were the conclusions of an undoubtedly learned tribunal after hearing what, in Sir Cecil Carr's happy phrase, has been described as an indictment of British civil servants "for conspiracy to steal certain powers, the property of the Legislature." The verdict was not, as some dissatisfied critics would apparently have us believe, "not guilty, but



don't do it again," but rather a plain statement that if present remedies are required, it is in the procedure of Parliament, rather than in the practice of the Civil Service, that they should be introduced. The Committee's advice to the Civil Service was rather "go on observing the present precautions and apply them as good rules on all possible occasions."

#### JUDICIAL OR QUASI-JUDICIAL DECISIONS BY THE EXECUTIVE

Indictment for conspiracy to steal legislative powers was merely one-half of the charge against British civil servants. They were also accused of conspiracy to steal certain powers, the property of the Judiciary. The indignation of more than one generation of English lawyers trained upon Dicey's celebrated exposition of the rule of law and the supremacy of Parliament might be expected to blaze with vigour at any such alleged invasion of their sacred domain. Special interest therefore attaches to the review of this second half of the indictment made by the Committee on Ministers' Powers. Several distinguished lawyers were members of the Committee and their report is an illuminating survey of the field which every civil servant should read.

They analysed the question by showing that in Courts of Law a judicial decision arises over a dispute between two or more parties and involves :

1. The presentation of their case by the parties to the dispute.
2. Ascertainment of the facts by means of evidence, if the dispute is a question of fact.
3. Submission of legal argument by parties if the dispute is a question of law.
4. A decision which disposes of the whole matter by a finding upon the facts in dispute and an application of the law of the land to the facts so found, including where required, a ruling upon any disputed question of law.

A quasi-judicial decision, of the type with which Ministers of the Crown are being increasingly entrusted in recent years, differs from a judicial decision proper in that it never involves point No. 4 above and does not necessarily involve point No. 3. In other words, the Minister makes the decision or accepts responsibility for the decision made in his name by the officials in his department. Decisions of some sort or another are being made every day in government departments and it is important to distinguish between mere administrative decisions essential to the operation of Acts of Parliament about which there can be no argument or dispute and the decisions which involve disputed questions of fact and of law.

Examples of judicial decision by Ministers quoted by the Committee

included: the power conferred upon the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries by section 189 of the Law of Property Act, 1922, to adjudicate upon compensation for the extinguishment of manorial rights; powers given to the Minister of Health under section 89 of the National Health Insurance Act of 1924 to decide, *e.g.*, whether any employment is employment within the meaning of the Act.

Examples of powers of quasi-judicial decision conferred upon the executive are more numerous. Under section 69 of the Housing and Town Planning Act, 1909, the Minister of Health is empowered to adjudicate in disputes between district and county medical officers of health. Under section 19 of the Education Act, 1921, the then "Board" of Education was empowered in case of dispute to rule whether a locally provided school was necessary or not. Under the Housing Act, 1925, the Minister of Health was empowered to decide upon disputes arising from the compulsory acquisition of land by a local authority in connection with schemes for the improvement of unhealthy areas. Examples of this sort could fill many pages.

#### PRINCIPLES OF NATURAL JUSTICE

In all such judicial activities the executive must clearly strive to make its decisions in conformity with the grand principles of law by which the judiciary is itself animated. These are:—

1. A man may not be judge in his own cause.

Wherever a Minister or his Department has an interest in securing one type of decision rather than another, Parliament should provide an independent tribunal to judge the case.

It is in accordance with the spirit of this rule, for example, that the Ministry of Health was made the central pension authority for determining appeals under the Old Age Pensions Act, 1908, although the Commissioners of Customs and Excise was the Department responsible for the administration of those pensions.

2. No party ought to be condemned unheard.
3. A party is entitled to know the reason for a decision.
4. The report of the departmental official conducting an enquiry should normally be communicated to the parties.

This principle is not always so readily agreed as the other three.

#### SPECIALIZED COURTS OF LAW

Disputes on very many subjects daily arising in Great Britain are being decided not by the judiciary in the Courts of Law but by specialized bodies or tribunals. Examples include the domestic courts in certain professions quite outside the scope of public administration. A Committee

of the Law Society can, for example, under powers given to it by the Solicitors Act of 1919, strike a solicitor off the Roll of Solicitors. The solicitor can then appeal to the High Court of Justice to be restored.

Under the Medical Act, 1858, the General Medical Council can disqualify a medical practitioner and probably deprive him of a professional income if he is found by the Council to have been guilty of infamous conduct in any professional respect. From this decision there is no appeal.

Specialized Courts created by or on the recommendation of Ministers of the Crown include the Railway and Canal Commission, the Railway Rates Tribunal, the Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies, the Special Commissioners of Income Tax, the Court of Referees and the Umpire who jointly decide upon disputed claims for unemployment insurance benefit, the Pensions Appeal Tribunal created by the War Pensions Act, 1921, and the referees appointed under the Widows, Orphans and Old Age Contributory Pensions Act, 1925.

This development is by no means peculiar to the United Kingdom. In the United States of America there are bodies just as powerful, such as the Federal Trade Commission, the Interstate Commerce Commission, the Securities and Exchange Commission, the war-time Office of Price Administration and others.

There is no reason to suppose that these bodies and others like them which we may see in the future should fail to work out a coherent and valuable body of administrative "case-law." Their reasoned decisions will help to elaborate for the guidance of posterity the lines of a just and equitable code of procedure for the satisfactory achievement of those ends of social action which it has been made their responsibility to pursue.

So evidently thought the Committee on Ministers' Powers, who reported that "our conclusion in the whole matter is that there is nothing radically wrong about the existing practice of Parliament in permitting the exercise of judicial and quasi-judicial powers by Ministers and of judicial power by Ministerial Tribunals, but that the practice is capable of abuse, that dangers are incidental to it if not guarded against, and that certain safeguards are essential if the rule of law and the liberty of the subject are to be maintained."

The Committee proceeded to draw up specific recommendations to minimize the dangers which they foresaw to be inherent in judicial activity by civil servants. Their recommendations included the following:—

1. Judicial as distinct from quasi-judicial functions should normally be entrusted to the ordinary Courts of Law and their assignment by Parliament to a Minister or Ministerial Tribunal should be regarded as exceptional and requiring justification in each case.

2. Where exceptions to this rule are necessary, Ministerial Tribunals should be created instead of leaving the decision to the Minister personally.

3. Quasi-judicial decisions fall naturally to Ministers themselves and not to Courts of Law or Ministerial Tribunals, except where a departmental "interest" is involved.

4. Parties to the dispute should be given the opportunity of stating their case, of knowing the case they have to meet and of answering it if they can.

5. Every Minister exercising a judicial or quasi-judicial function and every Ministerial Tribunal exercising a judicial function should give the decision in the form of a reasoned document, which should be available to the parties.

6. Wherever statutory public enquiries are held in connection with the exercise of judicial or quasi-judicial functions by Ministers, the report made by the person holding the enquiry should be published ; and only the most exceptional circumstances and the strongest reasons of public policy should be held to justify a departure from this rule.

7. Improved arrangements should be made to ensure that the jurisdiction of the High Court of Justice should be available to compel Ministers and Ministerial Tribunals to keep within their powers and "to hear and determine according to law."

The Committee supported simplifications of legal procedure in this connection and the absolute right of parties aggrieved by the judicial decision of a Minister or Ministerial Tribunal to appeal on questions of law but not on any issue of fact.

In conclusion, the Committee recommended against a proposal to introduce into England a system of administrative law and administrative judges on the French pattern, but pointed out that adequate provision has yet to be made in British constitutional law to amend proceedings against the Crown if the supremacy of law was to become fully extensive throughout the structure of the British Constitution.

The main defects in the position of the subject seeking a remedy against the executive government were noted as :—

(1) Owing to the peculiar procedure in cases in which the Crown is litigant the subject is to some extent placed at a disadvantage.

(2) There is no effective remedy against the Crown in the County Court.

(3) The Crown is not liable to be sued in tort.

This is a subject which does not strictly belong either to delegated legislation or to public administration proper and it is moreover one to which Parliamentary attention has already been devoted. Nevertheless,

it is a technical point with which civil servants should be acquainted, for a solution to the many difficulties it involves has not yet been found.

### RECONCILING ORDER AND LIBERTY

If bureaucracy were the menace current alarmist battle-cries pretend, the place to look for it would be in this sphere of delegated legislation and in the exercise by the executive of judicial or quasi-judicial powers. It is here that public administration has the greatest opportunity to make rules of its own to which the public are required to conform.

### BUREAUCRACY DOES NOT EXIST IN ENGLAND

It was certainly reassuring that a most jealous scrutiny and most thorough study of this danger zone for public liberties by an expert and representative Committee of Enquiry revealed nothing which, by a wild stretch of imagination, could be regarded as evidence that the executive are getting out of hand or are using public money for little schemes of their own, free from Parliamentary control. Serious and well-informed critics of administrative power to use delegated powers to make rules and orders or to give quasi-judicial decisions, do not make such a charge. "It has been no part of my thesis," says Mr. C. K. Allen in his considered review of the whole subject ["Law and Orders," 1945, p. 276] "to accuse the executive of conspiratorial perversion of justice or government for I do not believe such charges in the main to be warranted." The problem, as he recognizes, should not be discussed on the assumption that the difficulties arising from administrative action have their origin solely in the malevolence or self-seeking of government officials. "It cannot be said with any justice," he asserts [*ibid.*, p. 198] "that delegated legislation is made in the dark or without conscientious effort to understand the nature of the subject matter and the scope and effect of the ordinances when made. The real complaint in my submission is that when the sphere of delegated legislation is unreasonably extended, and when the executive is authorized to regulate an inordinate number of transactions and relationships, it becomes impossible to apply the cautious preliminaries which are practicable within reasonably defined limits." These words in the complaint "unreasonably extended," "inordinate number," "impossible to apply" are all relative terms and they beg some big questions. Mr. Allen, of course, realizes that they do when he says, after reciting a longer and more detailed list of a dozen "immediate reforms" which he advocates, that "beyond these matters of immediate amendment there are certain larger and more controversial questions which go to the root of the whole governmental order" [*ibid.*, p. 279]. The first of these questions, and it is indeed the chief, is what he describes as "the everlasting enigma of the boundaries

of State action." With those words he surely points to the real question at issue between the critics of administration, such as himself, and the officials who are forced to administer the ever-growing mass of public business and to guide social action along new paths. Sir Cecil Carr, whose authority in this field is based upon a life-long concern with and study of delegated legislation, had already pointed out this underlying conflict over political philosophy when, at the conclusion of his service as Editor of Statutory Rules and Orders, he wrote, "it seems possible to predict a man's opinion of the so-called encroachment of the executive upon the legislative and judicial powers from a knowledge of his social philosophy. In both countries [England and the United States of America] much opposition to departmental activities springs from a fundamental disagreement with the legislative policy which the department has to enforce." [*Law Quarterly Review*, October, 1942, Vol. CCXXXII, p. 487.]

The nature of the conflict being thus clearly and unmistakably manifest, it is evident that its solution is not to be found purely and simply in the administrative sphere alone. "Reform," or revision of the present system of conducting public business by delegating more and more powers to the Civil Service, can clearly be achieved either by diminishing the amount of public business or by getting more of it done by Parliament. Neither course of action seems able to promise helpful results.

### NO THREAT TO THE SUPREMACY OF PARLIAMENT

If the legislature could work harder and go into all proposals for new kinds of social action much more thoroughly and in greater detail, would it succeed in finding ways of avoiding the mistakes of which the executive is occasionally accused? The vastness of the field to be covered and the tremendous difficulty of providing for every contingency, of foreseeing all the indirect results of action and of co-ordinating all forms of action are so great that it may, with all deference, be suggested that Parliament would possibly have no greater success than the Civil Service.

It is plainly impossible for Parliament to do all the work. Neither is it necessary, for, although holes may now and again be picked in the rules and regulations made by the Civil Service under powers given to it by Parliament, the vast bulk of such regulatory work is not challenged. To attempt to plant the charge of bureaucracy, in its true meaning, upon the Civil Service because of these few exceptions would be ludicrous.

What is feared, of course, are not the ill-effects of occasional unsatisfactory regulations but the weakening or inadequacy of Parliamentary control of which the offending regulations are rightly regarded as the symptom. Any challenge to the grand principle of Parliamentary

supremacy [Principle 1 above], for which Englishmen have striven continuously through many arduous centuries, is certain to arouse the strongest emotions. If the challenge were real the emotions would be justified. If it were true that, concealed in the hidden fastnesses of Whitehall, there were if not seething masses, yet even half a dozen well-trained members of the Civil Service scheming how to elude Parliamentary control, to grab supreme power and to direct social action along paths of their own devising, it would not be very long before they were discovered and eliminated. Such a picture, needless to say, belongs to the realm of pure fantasy of the nightmare variety.

Seen soberly in the cold light of day the real problem is in practice the problem of doing difficult jobs: deciding how to allot limited man and woman power between various industries in wartime, working out rationing schemes to ensure that limited stocks of food, clothes and footwear are justly shared by all, operating the vast national health insurance and unemployment insurance schemes, balancing the national expenditure by collecting taxation, carrying out inspections of mines, factories and workshops to ensure proper safety standards. These and a hundred and one other complicated tasks make up the daily life of public administration in practice.

#### THE BASIS OF TRUST IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

From the point of view of political theory, these problems all conceal a more general, fundamental problem, that of preserving a due balance between order and liberty. There is no doubt that both the practical, administrative problem and the theoretical political problem present great difficulties. How difficult the practical problem can be was shown in the preliminary discussion of the principles of organization and efficiency. The theoretical problem is also in essence a reflection of the practical difficulties and it would not have emerged had not the practical problem throughout the ages proved to be so acutely difficult.

Earlier in this work it was said that the work of guiding and transforming social action on all fronts transcends the capacity of any individual mind, whether that of a politician or administrator. What does this mean if not that the individual citizen has got to trust himself to specialists farther than he can himself see in matters of government? Is this a dangerous doctrine? It is a trust displayed every day by everybody when they buy bread, drink milk, tea or beer and when they ride in a 'bus, tram or train. Thanks in no small measure to the regulations which Parliament has authorized public administration to enforce, this trust in the butcher, the baker, the candlestick maker is not misplaced to-day. One hundred years ago the story was very different. Then food and drink were shamefully adulterated by "private enterprise"

in search of personal gain. Safety regulations in factory, mine and workshop were then rudimentary. The much vaunted free enterprise of the business man might be freedom to rob, swindle and poison his fellow men. Bank failures, wildcat company promotions, fraudulent booms in railway shares and scores of similar stories of trickery and deceit would, if collected, add up to a staggering total economic loss to society beside which the misdemeanours of so-called bureaucracy from the dawn of British history up to the present day would pale into insignificance, or to vary the cliché, look like two cents.

Public morality has perhaps improved during the last hundred years, but whether it has or has not, there can be no doubt that the individual in his private economic relations is just as dependent upon the honesty, skill and willingness to work of his fellow citizens in industry and commerce as he is upon his fellow citizens in public administration. The same grand consequences of the universal principle of the division of labour apply equally in both spheres. The great difference between them is that in the sphere of government the citizen himself possesses very real powers to protect himself whereas in the sphere of trade he has, beyond the protection which the law and public administration afford him, merely indirect powers of self-protection such as by making his purchases elsewhere, if he survives the consequences of his mistakes and can find better alternative sources of supply.

#### WHY OFFICIALS ARE UNPOPULAR

Such a conclusion, however just and accurate, will not alter the fact that officials are not popular. "Bureaucracy," to the popular mind, means more than unconstitutional encroachment by the executive: it means the executive itself, the body of officials whose salary is paid out of taxation. The origin of "bureaucracy" as a "smear word" is partly awareness of this fact and dislike of paying taxes, partly consciousness of some of what, in the last chapter, were called the occupational diseases of public administration, and partly resentment at the frustrations which planned social action introduces into a hitherto unplanned and free field of individual activity.

Planned social action often cannot be had unless backed by the coercive and restrictive power of the State and this inevitably must be exercised through State officials. Coercion and restriction spell frustrations for somebody, and it is no very original discovery of our social psychologists that frustrations in turn breed attitudes of resentment and aggression. On whom more obviously can the aggressive instincts be let loose than upon the public servant whose official duties provoke them? The more clumsy and inefficient the regulations, and they are not always easy to produce in perfect shape at once, the greater the righteous indignation



against the officials. Efficiency itself in the work would not ensure the absence of criticism. The orderliness which planned social action seeks to introduce into various spheres of the national economy is plainly thought to be excessively dearly bought because of the sacrifice it is alleged to make of personal liberty.

Whose liberty is sacrificed and who, if anybody, benefits from the sacrifice, are questions rarely dispassionately weighed and stated. Personal liberties are not threatened by State action alone. When an industrial company annexes other companies by merger, when a co-operative store drives a small grocer out of business, somebody's liberty goes. When the complex amalgam of railway companies in Great Britain was fused into four great groups, many private companies lost the liberty they formerly had of making their own time-tables, designing their own engines, rolling stock, permanent way, tickets, uniforms, publicity posters and what not. All these were no doubt creative activities to the people engaged in them who were probably far from ready to admit that the big combines which took over the work were as successful at it as they had been. When the London Passenger Transport Board superseded the many private transport companies, the latter lost their liberty to operate their buses on routes of their own choosing. The amazing growth of the consumers' co-operative movement in Great Britain and Sweden has deprived thousands of men and women of a career of some independence as owners of small shops or factories. The public must judge which form of social action is most efficient and most conducive to the development of desirable social qualities. The increased facilities which the introduction of planned order has brought in these fields seem on the whole to make them acceptable to the community. Three independent and apparently unco-ordinated railway systems in the Isle of Wight, to take but one example, seemed to many a stranded traveller before 1914 to be an unnecessarily extravagant sacrifice of operative efficiency to "free enterprise."

### ORDER *versus* LIBERTY IN THE PLANNED STATE

As long as the problem of reconciling order with liberty is to be framed in abstract terms, without any attempt to assess the benefits brought by order and the extent to which liberty suffers—so that it can be seen who benefits and by how much, and who loses and by how much—no answer to the question can be given except in equally abstract terms. The most that can be achieved would be to try to emphasize neither at the expense of the other. Social progress might then be conceived as the effort to ride forward on the crest of a wave, neither slipping back into the stagnation of the trough behind, nor getting too far on the other side risking being swamped by the weight of water relentlessly coming

forward. The balance is difficult to maintain. No wonder that from half those perched on the crest come cries that we are going forward too fast, while the other half yell loud warnings that we are in danger of slipping back.

“Those behind cry forward,  
And those before cry back.”

The party of conservation and the party of progress both have the same ideal, to retain a moving equilibrium. Viewed in such abstract terms, the controversy is one in which both sides are right or both are wrong, so arriving at the tamest and most banal conclusion of any argument “that there is much to be said on both sides.”

#### PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND TOTALITARIANISM

When the Committee on Ministers' Powers signed their report on March 17th, 1932, Western European civilization, as it had been developed over a thousand years, was virtually intact, despite the menace of Italian fascism and some rude shocks elsewhere. A year later a new portent burst upon the world with the seizure of State authority in Germany by the Nazi party under Hitler. Arbitrary rule by decrees, made without reference to truly representative legislative assemblies or to public opinion and enforced in complete disregard of existing laws or judicial control—both phenomena for which the Committee on Ministers' Powers had looked anxiously but in vain in England—then became established and unshakable realities in Germany. The doctrine that the Law is something to which official action must conform was there given up in favour of the practice of regarding law as “that which is done officially.” The appalling consequences which swiftly followed: the robberies, bullying, beating, exile, imprisonment, starvation, torture, and murder of hundreds of thousands of German citizens, whose only crime was their Jewish origin or their disagreement with the Nazi Party, gradually burned their way into the consciences of most (but seemingly not yet of all) of the peoples of the world.

Relentless use of such measures to mobilize the German people in the service of a totalitarian State was soon followed by the much intensified and equally relentless use of the power so achieved against Germany's neighbours. To fight the desperate struggle in which they thus became involved, other States were forced into a correspondingly thorough totalitarian organization of their entire national resources. In no democratic country did this totalitarian conscription proceed to greater lengths than in Great Britain. Yet, again to quote Sir Cecil Carr, “If anyone is thinking that the extraordinary wide powers which have been conferred on the executive in Britain in the present war show the negation and the bankruptcy of democratic liberty, there are certain considerations to the

contrary" (*Concerning English Administrative Law*, p. 69). Those considerations were abundantly obvious to every resident in Great Britain, who was well aware that whatever discomforts and inconveniences he had to tolerate were due to the commanding exigencies of war and not to the extravagance of bureaucratic fancy.

Nevertheless, anxiety is not to be easily allayed, and no defender of human liberty and true democracy would wish to stifle continual discussion of this vital theme.

#### POWERS DELEGATED TO THE PUBLIC CORPORATION

The developments on the Continent were startling enough, but at home also government began to assume new forms. Provision had to be made for many new tasks and old ones required expansion. Public Corporations, Boards or Commissions were created to supersede the hitherto private and commercial direction of certain forms of social action. These new bodies did not, however, become government departments in the old sense of the words and they remain outside the traditional ministerially controlled machinery of administration.

There had been some experimental beginning of these novel forms of public authority before 1933. One, the Port of London Authority (1909), was a local administration. Others arose out of the need for social action made evident or enforced by the war of 1914-1918, such as the Forestry Commission (1919). Others were created to control and replan for wider objectives, proved inventions of potentially high social value such as the British Broadcasting Corporation (1927) or the Central Electricity Board (1927). Some aimed at bringing better and more efficient economic order into the confessed confusion caused by the uneven and patchy effort of private enterprise operating on too small and unco-ordinated a scale such as the London Passenger Transport Board (1933), the Coal Mines Reorganization Commission (1930) and the various Agricultural Marketing Boards [Milk (1933), Hops (1932), Bacon and Pigs (1933), Potatoes.] This is not the place to discuss the general administrative problems raised by these new Boards and Commissions. One characteristic feature of them from the standpoint of the present chapter is that on condition of accepting responsibility to the public they were given wide powers and authority in their fields of action, powers indeed of a monopoly nature akin to those possessed by government departments. But whereas government departments have their Minister in charge who is responsible immediately to Parliament, the responsibility of the Public Boards towards and their connection with Parliament appear somewhat remote although it may none the less be real in the last resort. In other words, all the principles of public administration should be illustrated in their operation although the pattern of authority

in the public Board or Corporation differs from that of a government department.

In this context the important fact about them is that they are rule-making bodies with a greater power to influence the daily comfort, convenience and often the income of very many more people than the average government department possesses. Naturally controversy over the extension of departmental rule-making powers has not spared these newer administrative organizations.

As public administration continually assumes new forms, so will public fears about it grow. It cannot be expected or desired that criticism will automatically be stilled as soon as the recent accusations of bureaucracy are completely exploded and as soon as Great Britain recovers freedoms temporarily surrendered in the crisis of war.

A statement of the old anxieties from a present-day point of view which has recently been widely read came in 1944 from Professor von Hayek in his arresting book *The Road to Serfdom*. In it he contended that the further wide extensions of government activity in the attempt to exercise far-reaching planned control of national economic activity will inevitably produce a totalitarian State system in which individual liberties are progressively and before long completely submerged. He considers, in other words, that if administrative activity extends in the economic sphere, it must do so at the price of freedom. Planning, therefore, which increasingly characterizes administrative effort, he holds, must sound the death-knell of democratic liberties which can be maintained only by leaving the shaping of society to chance results, determined not by forethought but by the results of the efforts of men of varying capabilities competing with each other on the open market. No very novel doctrine this, for it is a restatement of the traditional view expounded by such men as Ricardo and Herbert Spencer, neatly summarized in six words by a former President of the United States Chamber of Commerce: "the best government is the worst" and described by Professor Merriam as "the boycott of the State."

In striking contrast to such pessimistic views, it has been seen above how the fourth Principle of Public Administration rests upon the assumption that administration and public welfare improve in proportion to the extent to which such activities become increasingly rational, in other words, more successfully planned. Professor von Hayek recognizes the paradox which denial of such a principle would involve, but explains it upon the ground that the human intellect cannot become rational to the extent to which a fully planned national economy would demand. There is undoubtedly a very real problem of human capacity and the possibility of further development of mental capacity here. But the critics of administration do not pursue it on the plane of psychology or neurology.

Mr. C. K. Allen, in his book *Law and Orders*, referred to above and in a letter to *The Sunday Times* (of June 10th, 1945), takes a more general line: "If the theory of modern government is that every detail of public and private life must be regulated by law and demi-law, then the real truth is that the thing cannot be done without absurdity, contradiction and in the end, complete self-stultification." Arguments on this plane come dangerously near to setting up a man of straw for the pleasure of demolishing him. Rational planning of social action does not mean the inevitable need to plan all private action. During the darkest days of the war of 1939-1945, which had to be fought on totalitarian bases on both sides, not all private life in Britain was subject to official direction. The fear that broad lines of social action cannot be planned in specific fields without involving all other fields as well is not therefore supported by war experience. The general argument of the critics of rational planning is not squarely based as might have been expected upon the actual results of specific forms of social action in a democracy, such as the extension of old age pensions, social security insurances, milk and free meals for school children, family allowances and so on. Cleverly argued as Professor von Hayek's book undoubtedly is, it is supported by distressingly few illustrations drawn from practical problems and practical solutions of the types just mentioned. It does not seem to be part of the real world in which administrators have to live. Instead, the discussion is conducted mainly by the use of abstract terms such as "planning," "freedom," "liberty," "democracy," "socialism," "liberalism," "competition," "laws," and so on. With a more pragmatic approach, these terms might acquire a real weight but perhaps also an interpretation on lines which would no longer make the professor's arguments sound so convincing.

A less pessimistic view of human powers would in fact lead to an interpretation of the political and administrative scene which would allow for such things as administrative invention, which would hopefully scan emerging new forms of social and administrative action in the belief expressed by Professor Merriam, that "the inventive faculty of man has not yet exhausted all the molds of ingenuity, all the models of co-operation, contrivance, association." [*The Role of Politics in Social Change*, p. 120.] Just as Professor Hayek seems blandly oblivious to the many distressing and socially destructive results of economic competition, so he tends to slip into what Professor Merriam has called "an unwarranted assumption in the discussion of regimentation that in the absence of governmental regulation there is no equivalent regulation by someone else" (p. 129). The "cruelty of man to man on every level of action," as he points out, is a distressing feature of social life in general, which is apt to infect any form of control of one man by another, but

there is this much to be said on the side of administrative control, that it is at least in responsible hands ; subject in other words to the rule of law and not to that of the jungle in which it is left to the devil to remove all residual problems by eliminating the hindmost. In the uncertainty occasioned by such speculative argument it is worth while seeking illumination from the record of the practical achievement of public administration in Great Britain when it began to look like a totalitarian State during the war against Germany of 1939-1945.

#### ADMINISTRATION AND A PLANNED ECONOMY

Arguments about the extent to which State intervention can or should proceed must, as the discussion above has shown, be determined ultimately by a value judgment in which administrative facts and realities must guide political reasonings, as the estimates of the advantage or disadvantage of social action are usually called. The political theorists must, and in fact usually do, consult the administrators when they want such estimates. Is it possible to devise an efficient central direction of all economic activity according to a single plan and yet refrain from regimenting the lives of everybody to whom that plan must apply ? Professor von Hayek plainly declares that it is impossible. In his view the division of labour in society can become a truly effective agent of social progress only if it is decided by the force of competition acting automatically through a free price system. His argument rests upon the thesis that the tremendous range of economic activities in a modern society cannot be grasped by a single mind and he implies, therefore, that no political or administrative system would be adequate to the task of co-ordinating and directing such a vast complex whole. Most people on the basis of past experience, or rather relative lack of experience, probably share that view. The total effort of Great Britain during the world war has shown, however, to what a truly remarkable degree an administrative system can be developed when the need for it arises and is matched by a resolute determination to succeed.

Throughout most of the war years almost every essential commodity was strictly controlled. The Government turned wholesale grocer, fruiterer and milkman. Food, clothes, boots and shoes were rationed. Industrial effort was harnessed and reallocated. Hundreds of articles formerly available disappeared entirely from the markets. The men and women who used to produce them were conscripted into the Army, Navy and Air Force. Colossal armed forces were organized, equipped and flung into desperately fought actions in many parts of the globe. The public at home went short, but it was content to go short as part of the price of survival and as an investment in victory. The moral of this story may be regarded as inconclusive in support of British adminis-

trative ability to manage matters with equal success in normal times because of the ready willingness of the public in wartime to endure shortages and compulsions which they would not tolerate except under the greatest threat of danger.

The shortages were part of the price paid to secure, first and foremost for the fighting forces, aeroplanes, ships, guns, bombs, shells, tanks, arms and ammunition, food and clothing. Consequently the record does not completely answer the question whether administrative effort could effectively replace the force of competition as a guide to human effort in normal times. But in balancing any uncertainty arising on that ground, it must be allowed that in peacetime the State would be strengthened by having adequate resources in manpower. Not merely would the administrative machinery thereby benefit but the goods and services it would have for distribution would be very greatly increased. There would be more of them and they would not have to be drained away to sustain vast military, naval and aerial campaigns.

Britain's wartime story has been set out in stark detail in the official "Statistics Relating to the War Effort of the United Kingdom" [Cmd. 6564, 1944]. As a case study in public administration it is an unrivalled document showing how central planning not only can, but has in fact sustained a nation under conditions, at times of desperate difficulty, throughout five years of total war.

Look at a few extracts as a sample of the whole :—

## I. PRODUCTION

					Years	
					1940	1943
					Numbers	Numbers
<b>SHIPS AND MUNITIONS—</b>						
Major war vessels	...	...	...	...	106	168
Mosquito craft	...	...	...	...	121	337
Other vessels	...	...	...	...	200	1,601
Merchant vessels	...	...	...	...	810	1,204
Naval guns	...	...	...	...	1,486	20,023
Torpedoes	...	...	...	...	939	7,039
Tanks	...	...	...	...	1,397	7,476
Carriers, armoured cars	...	...	...	...	6,044	24,375
Field artillery	...	...	...	...	968	2,962
Anti-tank equipment	...	...	...	...	1,534	13,049
Small arms ammunition	...	...	...	...	572,000,000	3,046,000,000

				Years	
				1940	1948
				Numbers	Numbers
<b>AIRCRAFT—</b>					
Heavy bombers	...	...	...	41	4,614
Medium bombers	...	...	...	3,679	3,113
Fighters	...	...	...	4,283	10,727
				1935-1938	
				Average	
				Thousand tons	Thousand tons
<b>RAW MATERIALS—</b>					
Iron ore	...	...	...	12,417	17,702
Scrap for steel making	...	...	...	5,800	6,527
Hardwood	...	...	...	150	496
Soft wood	...	...	...	180	444
Pitwood	...	...	...	120	1,527
Newsprint	...	...	...	857	Nil
				1936-1938	
				Average	
				Thousand Tons	Thousand Tons
<b>CROPS HARVESTED—</b>					
Wheat	...	...	...	1,651	1,641
Potatoes	...	...	...	4,873	6,404
Vegetables...	...	...	...	2,384	2,687

These often stupendous figures give a scanty idea of the total wartime production between 1939 and 1945 but they are sufficient to show that production of essential things can be immensely increased by other methods than by relying upon competition and the price system. The increases were obtained as a result of centrally planned administrative direction. They did not give the civilian consumers a particularly comfortable time but that of course was not their object. Their aim was to produce the essential things necessary to win the war and at the same time to see that, despite the inevitable wartime shortages, the civilian population did not fall below an adequate but Spartan standard of nourishment and comfort. Both aims were achieved with a margin to spare.

While production in essential lines was being expanded to such a sensational degree, the decision had to be made to forgo other foods and commodities, as a glance at the following record of reduced imports will show :—



## FOOD IMPORTS TO THE UNITED KINGDOM

	1934-38 Yearly Average Thousand tons	1948 Thousand tons
Wheat and flour ...	5,451	3,975
Rice ... ..	1,524	258
Maize ... ..	3,395	66
Other animal feed- ing stuffs ...	1,719	12
Sugar ... ..	2,168	1,458
Fruit and vegetables	2,604	327
	Thousand cwts., 1938	Thousand cwts.
Fish ... ..	20,907	6,175

Rationing, shortages and queues, often associated by the opponents of planning with administrative incompetence (despite the daily evidence of cinema queues, which do not appear to raise similar complaints), are here shown to have been inevitable in the face of reduced ability to import the necessities of life. Administrative methods had to be found to ensure that the meagre supplies of essential foods were distributed as fairly as possible.

The task was more difficult by reason of the vast changes in the occupations of the men and women of the country. Plans had to be made to provide, from the total supplies available, sufficient to sustain an army of four and a half million men and half a million women.

To manage the new industries men and women had to be taken from their old work (or lack of work) and directed into special and often very novel employment.

Use was made by the executive of the full powers it possessed to mobilize every fit man and woman for war work, as the following figures show :—

## II. MANPOWER

	Thousands							
Mid-year	Total male population, aged 14-64	Armed forces	Whole-time Civilian defence	Muni-tions	Agri-culture etc.	Build-ing, etc.	Unem-ployed	Rest of male population
Men—								
1939	16,010	477	80	2,600	4,688	5,798	1,048	1,324
1944	15,910	4,502	225	3,210	4,059	2,900	71	948

Women—

(Female)

1939	*16,040	†—	—	506	852	3,479	302	10,901
1944	*16,020	†467	56	1,851	1,644	3,102	31	8,869

\* Total female population, aged 14-59

† Women's Auxiliary Forces

Again, fuller details of these changes may be sought in the official report from which these striking figures have been taken. Again, also, the remarkable transfers in the nation's manpower from one employment to another were not effected by offering greater inducements in the shape of higher earnings to men and women to persuade them to change their employment. People were mostly moved about by official directions which were loyally obeyed because everybody knew that the fate of their country was at stake. At the same time the movement was not left to chance. It was centrally planned by the executive government. It was a triumph of public administration. It proves that human organization can succeed in operating what Professor von Hayek describes as impossible, namely, "a central direction of all economic activity according to a single plan," in other words, a national effort co-ordinated by public administration. If it does not completely disprove, it at least qualifies his assertion that "it is the very complexity of the division of labour under modern conditions which makes competition the only method by which such co-ordination can be brought about" (p. 36). For it is true that the supreme necessities of war, where they did not evoke, as they spontaneously did, a devoted willingness to serve the country, they compelled it by offering the harsh alternative of annihilation at the hand of a completely ruthless enemy.

"Co-ordination," says Professor von Hayek, "cannot, as some planners seem to imagine, become a new specialism" (p. 41). This remark can only mean that public administration can never be adequate to the task of managing a national economy. Again he may be right, because it is clear that wartime necessities drastically limited human freedom to produce and consume. The central direction of the national economy was to that extent simplified. He contends that common action or what in the third principle of public administration has been called social action, if it is to be successful must be "limited to the fields where people agree on common ends." Hitherto in England at least public administration has not been required by Parliament to pursue social action which lacks such agreement. Nor, it may be asserted, is it likely to be harnessed to such unpopular tasks in future as long as

Parliament truly represents public opinion. Other countries have been less fortunate at times and the example of the failure of public administration in the United States to make a success of Prohibition is a conspicuous example of what happens when social action lacks full public agreement.

To this extent, Great Britain's wartime record of public administration was achieved in a field, a vast field, wherein people were agreed on common ends. As normal conditions return and as people enjoy freedom once more to pursue peacetime interests, public administration will doubtless be relieved of a large part of its wartime tasks, to the satisfaction of both public and administrators alike. But the war record remains to caution the rash critics of administrative planning and to prove the truth of the ancient belief that in public administration, as in other walks of life, men can accomplish great things if they set their minds to them.

### III. ADMINISTRATION

Such, in bare outline, is a sample of some part only of the results of the stupendous task of managing a centrally planned direction of national activity during five years of desperate peril. What of the "hordes of officials" required to manage the whole machinery of State?

The following figures tell the story:—

	Mid- 1939	Mid- 1944	
National Government Service :			Increase
Men employed ... ..	416,000	520,000	} 876,000
Women employed ... ..	123,000	495,000	
Local Government Service—			Decrease
Men employed ... ..	520,000	322,000	} 56,000
Women employed ... ..	326,000	468,000	

The figures of the Local Government Service are given here in case it is supposed that the central Civil Service sought relief from its burdens by devolving a lot of its work on the local authorities. The increase in the Civil Service is probably very much less than most people would have expected. It is true that 104,000 more men were employed in it in 1944 than in 1939, but much of this increase occurred in the industrial employees in naval dockyards, Royal Arsenal, munition works and other industrial establishments. The increase in office workers, the

"bureaucrats" of popular fancy, is therefore small, yet by this small increase Great Britain was transformed into a centrally planned State and equipped to sustain the crushing demands of total war.

The magnitude of the task accomplished by this force of just over one million men and women out of a working population of about thirty millions cannot be pictured without a more detailed study of the war record of Great Britain as it has been reflected in the mobilization, equipment and maintenance of armies in the field, of fleets and convoys at sea, and of the Royal Air Force. To these primary duties must be added the no less essential control and direction of industry, agriculture, imports and exports, transport, civilian consumption, taxation, savings, and public finance. The record here briefly referred to cannot, moreover, be properly assessed without some reference to the menace, dislocation, injuries and death resulting from enemy attacks against which public administration was forced to improvise. In the face of these and other difficulties public health was sustained and improved, while infant mortality figures declined to a record low figure.

These facts are recorded, not in order to prove that the central direction of all social action is possible in peacetime, still less that it would be desirable. Such propositions involve political questions outside the scope of this work. What the record shows conclusively is that public administration can undertake very complex tasks with success when it is given the opportunity to act. Inevitably also the facts here recounted proportionately weaken arguments against the central direction or control of particular functions in the public interest that rest mainly or entirely on the contention that public administration cannot do the job.

The few samples taken from this impressive record of national achievement do, in fact, provide an object lesson in public administration which administrators and critics alike should ponder. The illustrations they furnish of the principles of public administration deserve a volume to themselves. Here it must suffice to recall that the war achievement of the United Kingdom was accompanied by a radical and relatively rapid change of social conditions without impairing the political direction of Ministers [Principle 1] who remained responsible to the people. The results of the General Election of July, 1945, were to prove that no administrative measures of a publicity or propaganda type or any other deflected the expression of public will in favour of the executive which was in fact replaced by popular vote [Principle 2].

Of all the principles, the third is perhaps most clearly relevant in this survey of the wartime work of public administration, since the social necessity of an efficient administration then stood out as never before. "The Civil Service," said a Member of Parliament in the House of Commons on January 28th, 1943, "is the pivot on which the whole

management of the war and of war production turns, and if that pivot had been weak or had failed I am certain this country would have come to disaster." Between 1939 and 1945 there could be no doubt about the necessity for administrative effort if the united action of the British was to be directed against the new barbarism. The Legislature did not question the desirability of authorizing the executive and administration to find the means to carry out its will to victory [3.01, 3.04, 3.05] although the process meant delegating legislative powers to an unheard-of degree. Critics who had been strongly opposed to allowing public administration to guide, persuade and even to exhort the general public were content to forget their horror at the constitutional impropriety of looking to the executive and administration to exercise positive leadership. That leadership was shown in many ways, in preaching the virtues of saving, silence and unrelenting effort; in recommending one form of consumption rather than another, down to details of preserving foodstuffs, making clothes, and cookery practice; not to mention the conduct of health campaigns against diseases, including the hitherto unmentionable venereal group. Not all these publicity campaigns may be necessary in more spacious days of enlarged public resources, but the example of their wartime existence demonstrates that they are a legitimate administrative tool [3.02] and can be utilized without sinister results on public opinion. The magnitude of the apparently overwhelming disaster by which Western European democracy and civilization was all but engulfed affords surely the most convincing proof of the statement of the incommensurability of qualitative judgments [about goods such as human freedom and civilization] and quantitative judgments of an economic type [3.08]. By all means let us have studies of the "political economy of war," but not without the essential complementary studies of the political and administrative values as well. The economic approach in isolation cannot but be tenuous, thin and unsatisfying.

Between 1939 and 1945 all that gives meaning and purpose to life for the average man and woman hung in the balance, but it was not an economic balance.

The sum and substance of the freedoms, rights, enjoyments and satisfactions then at stake can all be summarized by saying that the future of Justice and of the rule of law was at stake. Justice may carry a balance but in her other hand she holds a sword. Never again dare mankind forget her symbolism of the necessity to wield that sword in defence of those ultimate values of the human spirit which so narrowly escaped extinction, perhaps for a millennium, while the timid were anxiously counting the costs of action and wavering before the stark necessity of paying any price for victory though that price might be death not merely for self but for family, for friends and for many other nations.

SELECTED LIST OF BOOKS AND PERIODICAL ARTICLES ILLUSTRATING  
CHAPTER IV

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The Place of Public Administration in a Changing Society. R. C. Jarvis. P.A. XV. 4.

The Civil Service and the Judiciary. C. F. Fraser. P.A. XVI. 4.  
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Charles Winter. P.A. XIII. 4.

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The Co-ordination of Law and Administration. E. J. R. Eaglesham.  
P.A. XIV. 2.

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P.A. XVIII. 3-4.



## CHAPTER V

### THE CONTROL OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

MENTION of the personal and occupational defects to which their profession renders civil servants liable had already raised in Chapter III the problem of the means of controlling public administration before it was thrown up in more acute form in the discussion in the last chapter on the possible abuse of the legislative, judicial and quasi-judicial powers delegated to the executive by Parliament. How, it may be asked, are these potentially dangerous executive officials to be kept in their proper places ?

It is a natural question, but before any attempt is made to answer it all the emphasis must first be thrown upon a categorical assertion that over by far the most extensive range of their duties it is the civil servants themselves who keep within their appointed limits without it being necessary for any external controls to come into play at all. Popular journalism, in its running fire of criticism of officialdom, may like to give the impression that civil servants, like a flock of sheep (except that civil servants are usually likened to a more predatory animal than a sheep), would be straying all over the place if it were not for the vigilance, bark and agility of the sheep dogs (often the same self-appointed journalistic would-be regents of public life).

The seventh principle of public administration helps to provide a more realistic picture of the actual facts. Public administration was there referred to as an automatic component of the machinery of government possessing mass and momentum. Like a huge flywheel, it nominally revolves without interference or the need for adjustment. Yet it is a flywheel fitted with an internal governor and an external brake which can be brought into operation whenever desired. This chapter can safely be devoted to the governor and the brake if it is clearly understood that, essential as they are to the proper functioning of the machinery of State as a whole, they are neither the most frequently used nor the most important part of the mechanism itself. The machinery is designed to move and to act, and it is successful in proportion to the rarity of the occasions upon which outside intervention is required.

A little reflection will show why this must be so. The grand principle of the division of labour, to which reference has frequently been made in this work, would be robbed of a large part of its utility and importance if the men and women discharging any of the thousand and one separate duties by which social life is sustained, could not be trusted to do their

jobs without having an army of vigilant controllers posted to watch over them. The argument is so frequently used by the opponents of government interference that they tend to forget its equal relevance to the daily work of public administration. Almost every profession and calling recognizes the duty of its members to render honest service to the community and most professions at any rate have their own standards of efficiency and behaviour to which all their members must conform. The State recognizes many of these professional codes as it was seen in the last chapter when mention was made of the judicial authority allowed to such bodies as the General Medical Council.

The Civil Service obviously cannot be a self-regulating profession in that sense, although the standards of conduct and efficiency to which civil servants must conform are in fact drawn up very largely by civil servants themselves. The rules so made are part of the internal machinery for the control of public administration, and there can be no doubt about their adequacy.

#### INTERNAL CONTROLS

Continuing for a moment the mechanical analogy in the last section, the machinery of administration was said there to be fitted with a governor or self-regulating device controlling the movement of the machine of which it forms a part. Such internal controls in a government department range all the way from section heads of small departments up to the permanent secretary and Minister at the top. Since no organization will be better than its employees can make it, the first control obviously needed is control over the performance of individual civil servants. It should surprise nobody to learn that if a civil servant is guilty of scamped, slovenly or inaccurate work, he is certain to hear about it before long. A reprimand may not be thought particularly effective. At a time when young women were being first admitted into the upper strata of the Civil Service in the administrative grade, a cartoon depicted a civil servant arriving home in tears explaining to his wife that "Miss Jones had been annoyed with him." This not particularly piquant attempt at humour may serve as a reminder that most civil servants are careful to avoid exposing themselves to the possibility of censure, principally through sheer self-respect and a keen desire to do their job well. They show, that is to say, that spirit in which alone a great organization can become efficient, namely, a willing contribution of spontaneous energy and devotion to duty.

How that energy is aroused and sustained would need a treatise in itself, for it is part of human psychology generally and there is no reason to suppose that the motives and reactions of civil servants are so different from those of their fellow-citizens to set them in this respect in a class

apart. Whatever ethical systems are used they will fit civil servants as well or as ill as other men and women. If, with Jeremy Bentham, the matter is looked at purely upon the utilitarian plane, it will be found that civil servants derive as much satisfaction as others do from pleasures such as those afforded by wealth, skill, amity, a good name, power, benevolence and expectation. Likewise they shun with other men the pains associated with privation, awkwardness, enmity, an ill name, and all the other items with which such a hedonistic calculus could be filled. Those responsible for discipline and good performance within the Civil Service are not therefore without resources should they need to bring them into play.

The most obvious rewards which a civil servant can earn are the annual increase in his salary and promotion to a position of greater responsibility which is usually, but not always, accompanied by a higher range of salary. Conversely, he can be punished by having his annual movement of salary withheld or by being "passed over" by his colleagues or his juniors in the race for promotion. He may also be reduced in rank and pay to a lower grade but this, although not unknown, is a form of punishment which has less frequently been invoked, largely, it may be asserted, because it is so rarely required. The contrast between the rules governing the British Civil Service, and the encyclopaedic body of regulations, orders, prohibitions and penalties found in the German Civil Service is prodigious.

Since 1921 a system of annual reports upon the conduct and efficiency of civil servants has been widely adopted in the Service. It applies to officials whose salaries are below £700 a year. Their superior officers are asked to assess their abilities by giving separate marks or ratings for their :—

- Knowledge of branch.
- Knowledge of department.
- Personality and force of character.
- Judgment.
- Power of taking responsibility.
- Initiative.
- Accuracy.
- Address and tact.
- Power of supervising staff.
- Zeal.
- Official conduct.

Special remarks are invited upon all these factors as well as upon the officer's performance and ability generally. At the same time a special estimate is asked for of his degree of fitness for promotion under one of the four rubrics :—

Exceptionally well qualified.

Highly qualified.

Qualified.

Not yet qualified.

Refusal to despair of the most unpromising specimen is a comforting feature of the fourth and final grade in this catalogue. Although widely used, it is not universally adopted. The admittedly crude and imperfect methods so far elaborated by psychologists in the attempt to measure and assess personality whether by subjective reports or objective testing, certainly point to the need for caution in placing very great reliance upon such a tabulation of the supposed components of human character.

In some departments these reports are called for quarterly instead of annually, particularly during the probation period, which new recruits to the Service or newly promoted officials are required to serve before being assured of confirmation of their appointment.

Some of the rewards of the Service are more exalted and gratifying, although less tangible than an increased monthly salary, particularly when they take the form of admission to one of the orders of knighthood or the award of some other coveted distinction. The extracts on pages 67 and 68 have already afforded a commentary on one aspect of this subject in a comic vein. Witticisms at the expense of those selected for distinction are sometimes encountered in other quarters. Thus the letters I.S.O. which a civil servant is entitled to append to his name if he receives the Imperial Service Order, often awarded to meritorious public servants towards the end of their official career, have been variously transliterated as "I'm soon off" or more cruelly as "*Ignotus sed ornatus*." Any comment upon the good taste of, as well as any conjecture about the motives inspiring such sallies, must obviously lean heavily in the direction of assuming disappointed ambition in their authors.

From men to machinery [never forgetting, however, the special application in this field particularly of the rule that "trust in machinery as a substitute for specific kindness, is one of the besetting sins of social reform" and that "perfection of machinery counts for so little, the existence of good faith and goodwill for so much" (quoted by Pigou, A. C., in *Principles and Methods of Industrial Peace*, 1905, page 113)]. Since the end of the war of 1914-18, establishment officers have been added to every government office, and it is to them that the head of the office normally turns for advice upon problems of staff and organization. Transfers, promotion, the staffing of new branches and their relation to the existing structure of the department, revisions of that organization and the introduction of new methods are decided upon by the head of the office (the "line" authority of Principle 5) and in his name, but on

the advice of the establishment officer which is always likely to be carefully considered and usually to be adopted.

On questions of major importance no decision is likely to be taken by the head of the office without the advice of the heads of other departments or branches concerned. Before promotions are made every candidate is carefully considered by a promotions board, since no other question is likely to excite a more burning curiosity and interest within an office, particularly among the people and the grades affected, than the question of the choice of people for promotion.

Here in miniature may be seen in actual operation what Professor Hayek calls "the nightmare of English nineteenth-century political thinkers: the state in which no avenue to wealth and honour would exist save through the government" [*Road to Serfdom*, p. 80]. Civil servants may be said to work under conditions considered by John Stuart Mill to be intolerable when he wrote "but that a handful of human beings should weigh everybody in the balance, and give more to one and less to another at their sole pleasure and judgment, would not be borne unless from persons believed to be more than men and backed by supernatural terrors." Of course no such arbitrary power is possessed by the promotion boards within government departments, neither are salary scales or the award of honours bestowed at the caprice of a handful of men, although this handful certainly have the ultimate decision who is to be admitted to the avenues of relatively greater wealth and distinction. The machinery for promotion may not be perfect and every year some decisions are taken by it which add genuine surprise to the inevitable disappointment with which they are received. Nevertheless, on the whole, the business of promotions, like the business of administering and controlling the office generally (of which promotion arrangements are a part) works with tolerable efficiency.

#### EXTERNAL CONTROLS

On the principle that no machine can run for ever without care and attention, the units of the administrative machine are subjected to periodical oversight and adjustment. In this way controls from outside are brought to bear upon government departments. It is always a tricky business to invoke an outside power. It is one of the easiest ways to provoke resentment and bad feeling. However, criticism is good for the soul and civil servants cannot be, and certainly are not, spared their share of it.

#### I. TREASURY CONTROL

First in importance among the controlling forces is financial control.

Public administration involves spending money and all Ministers depend upon the House of Commons for the resources necessary to operate their departments. They must ask Parliament for these resources afresh every year and support their request with detailed estimates of their needs showing exactly how they propose to spend the money. Their need for funds for the Civil and Revenue Departments is presented every year to the House of Commons by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Not until he has put the Government's case as a whole does the House move on to discuss the estimates in closer detail. Then each Minister whose estimates are examined, and not all can be examined in any one year, must explain and defend his Department's programme.

The Navy, Army and Air Force Estimates are exceptions to this practice for they are presented separately by the First Lord of the Admiralty and the Secretaries of State for War and for Air respectively.

To prepare the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Ministers for these tasks, many civil servants have to work hard. Long before the finally typed estimates are laid upon the desks of the Ministers, the staff in the Accounts departments of each office have been busily engaged in going through them with the Establishment Officer and the heads of every other spending or revenue earning department or branch. Before the departmental estimates reach the Chancellor, the Treasury officials have themselves been through them to make as sure as they can that every item can be justified to the Chancellor and, if necessary, by the Chancellor to the House.

It is work for which the Treasury staff are prepared in advance, because government departments do not wait until it is time to present their estimates before approaching the Treasury for sanction for new enterprises likely to involve new expenditure.

This is not the place to recount the steady development of Treasury control over departmental finances which has been so marked a feature of British administrative history in the nineteenth century. The creation of the Consolidated Fund by William Pitt towards the end of the eighteenth century laid the foundations for the abolition of all the separate funds, often derived from fees, upon which departments had previously subsisted. All revenue was gradually brought into the Exchequer and Departmental expenses were increasingly charged to Special Votes. On this basis ever greater refinements in estimating and in appropriating or ear-marking grants for specific purposes, and increasing thoroughness in auditing, have gradually fashioned, year by year, the modern system of the Treasury control of public expenditure as we know it to-day. It was in the course of this process that the principle was developed requiring Treasury consent before any new charge can be imposed upon the Consolidated Fund. This last sentence deserves to be remembered. It is

a key to understanding much of the actual working of British Public Administration.

In our own time, particularly between the two wars, Treasury control gained in importance with the expansion of administrative activity. The creation of the Cabinet Secretariat was linked with the Treasury machinery of control by requiring an opinion from the Treasury upon any important new proposal by a government department involving expenditure *before* the matter could be considered by the Cabinet. In 1924 it was further required that the comments of the Law officers should also be obtained for the Cabinet upon any important new controversial measure as well as the Treasury views of its financial aspect.

What "Treasury control" means in practice, from the nature of the case, is not easy to say. Ultimately it depends, of course, upon the authority which the Chancellor of the Exchequer, as practical head of the Treasury (the Prime Minister is its nominal head) can exert in the Cabinet. Whenever a Minister and his Department are keenly enough concerned to get the funds to carry out the policy they have planned, and in all large-scale activities this may be assumed to be the case, then their success or failure will turn on the Minister's success in convincing his Cabinet colleagues and particularly the Chancellor.

On matters of lesser importance Ministers are unlikely to become involved. The permanent officials will then argue their projects themselves with their Treasury colleagues and usually arrive at agreement or a compromise. If the Treasury refuses, the refusal will be accepted as final in all minor matters.

Treasury control does not mean that departments cannot move hand or foot without first getting Treasury sanction. Treasury controls, like all controls, are exercised on the margin. To return to the mechanical analogy at the beginning of this chapter, these controls are in the nature of a brake, occasionally to be applied to reduce, but never to stop the operation of a largely self-regulating mechanism. Every department has a vast job to do and they are mostly left alone to get on with it. There can be no question of employing one set of experts in the departments to do the work and another set of experts in the Treasury or anywhere else to watch them do it.

The Treasury, staffed as it is with some of the keenest brains in the public service, brings to bear upon the work of the departments who do not get financial support without its consent, not the superior skill of a more qualified technician, but the wisdom of an administrator with a wider vision of the work of public administration as a whole and one exceptionally sensitive to the critical reactions of Parliament and of public when it comes to spending public money.

When the Treasury has intervened on particular points of practice, and

it has done so for over a hundred years with increasing authority, it has gradually built up an administrative code for the guidance of all departments, and particularly for their accounts departments or divisions.

There is a useful little manual, *Notes for the use of Accounts Branches of Government Departments* (4th edition, August 1st, 1929, H.M.S.O. 1929) which summarized the administrative code on its financial and accounting side.

Treasury control reaches beyond financial matters also. In particular, rules governing the conduct and treatment of civil servants are mainly drawn up in the Treasury. A complete collection and classification of all Treasury circulars, the medium by which the will of the Lords Commissioners of H.M. Treasury is made known, has never been attempted. Like the Statute Law and Case Law of England, the patient enquirer must produce his own code if he wants one. Clearly nobody so far has felt a very urgent need for such a comprehensive statement. Particular subjects, however, have their code. Just as the financial regulations have been summarized, so the principal rules and orders governing the Civil Service have been collected [Civil Service Orders in Council and Regulations].

It remains to note the powerful indirect influence exerted by the Treasury upon departmental activities. To put the situation by analogy, it may be said that the more timid public official will trouble the Treasury watchdogs as little as possible for fear of being bitten or even barked at. Particularly does this seem true in times of economic stringency when Treasury circulars calling for economy and yet more economy flood through Whitehall. Departmental chiefs depend upon the Treasury for too many favours lightly to run the risk of offending Their Lordships by ill-considered applications for funds which do not exist and for which Their Lordships are extremely disinclined to ask Parliament.

It is to be feared that many a valuable scheme for some useful piece of social action between the wars never got adequate consideration, not because an economizing Treasury turned it down but because the mere fear that it would be turned down made departmental officials refuse to put it to the Treasury and risk the reflection upon their judgment which a Treasury refusal might imply. If this is true, the Treasury have no doubt been blamed for a niggardliness in excess of that truly theirs. Some cynical and embittered public servants will exclaim upon the wild improbability that anything could exceed the niggardliness of the Treasury, but the reality of this official timidity (equally unbelievable in the Treasury no doubt) exists to suggest that the Treasury may not always have deserved the villainous reputation it has occasionally enjoyed as the butcher of Whitehall, out-Heroding Herod in a slaughter of the innocents.



## II. PARLIAMENTARY CONTROL

If a spirit of economy in the departments is partly to be attributed to an internal departmental reflection of Treasury attitudes (real or presumed) towards departmental expenditure, so the energy displayed by the Treasury itself in guiding the Civil Service is in part an activity induced in the Treasury by Parliamentary attitudes (real or presumed) on the same subject. That is to say, it is not *merely* the actual commands or instructions, obviously important as these are, but also the likely attitude of Treasury and Parliament which are influential in guiding departmental action.

Parliament, according to the first principle, possesses potential powers over the Civil Service, as over all other forms of national activity, amounting virtually to absolute authority. Such is the classic doctrine of the Sovereignty of Parliament. What precisely it means now and how its meaning differs from its meaning in the heyday of the Victorian era, is not strictly an administrative question. It is a constitutional question, but its importance is such that it is essential to refer to it in discussing the nature of Parliamentary control over the executive. There is evidence to show that the relative power of Parliament and Executive has radically changed. Bagehot had said that "The Legislature chosen in name to make Laws in fact finds its main business in making and keeping an executive." Latterly, doubt has been cast upon the effectiveness of the Legislature even in this limited role. "I am speaking now after forty years' experience," said the late Earl Lloyd George in 1931. "Parliament has really no control over the Executive; it is a pure fiction." The Sovereignty of the State, in his view, resides now in the Executive, not with Parliament. The Executive is, however, a Parliamentary Executive, and it is subject therefore to the day-to-day influence of Parliament which certainly is not a negligible force.

The classical doctrine of the supremacy of Parliament has clearly not survived two catastrophic wars undiminished. It will not lightly be given up despite ten years or more in the political life of one generation during which the Parliament of Great Britain was forced to devote the greatest endeavours of which it was capable to strengthening the hands of the Executive. Whatever the estimate may now be of the relative authority of Parliament and Executive, there can be little doubt of the reality of the influence, if not of "control" in the literal meaning of the word, which Parliament still brings to bear upon the details of executive and hence of departmental action. It is an influence which is, of course, continuous in the daily debates of both Houses during Parliamentary sessions which are studied by all members of the higher Civil Service whom they may influence in all manner of subtle ways without the need for formal resolutions upon departmental affairs. A set debate in this

House of Commons upon the Civil Service itself such as the discussion at some length on January 28th, 1943, was the first for about twenty years.

Parliamentary influence over the Executive is more directly exercised in practice in four principal ways :—

(a) *Day to day Parliamentary control through the machinery of Parliamentary Question and Answer.*—The importance and value of this simple piece of machinery has generally been underestimated outside the Civil Service, but very rarely within it. A Parliamentary Question is a compelling piece of business and until the civil servants dealing with it in the Government Department to whose Minister it is addressed have drafted a satisfactory answer to it, they have to drop all their other duties.

The Question is either for oral or written answer. Several days' notice are normally given before the Question is actually asked on the floor of the House of Commons. (The practice of asking questions does not extend to the House of Lords.) The written form is more suitable for conveying detailed information, particularly if tables of statistics are wanted. It has the added advantage that it does not take up so much of the crowded time-table of the House of Commons.

Needless to say the Parliamentary Question is often used as a device in party political struggles and is far from being always an innocent request for information (although many questions are merely that). Neither is it always an effort to check what are thought to be Departmental errors of judgment or failure of duty. Questions in Parliament are sometimes fired as torpedoes to sink the Minister at whom they are directed or the Government to which he belongs. By means of a Supplementary Question which the Speaker allows if it arises directly out of the first question and answer, a M.P. can sometimes take advantage of an inadvertent exposure of some vulnerable aspect of the Department's activities or of the Minister's action to get in a fatal thrust at the Government's expense.

In drafting their replies, civil servants naturally have to take such frightening possibilities into account, for they cannot commit the crime of letting their Chief down by a weak answer. Needless to say, their Chief, who usually has a very much more developed and refined appreciation of the temper of the House of Commons than the civil servants, is also well on his guard against such dangers.

There is no doubt that Parliamentary Questions play an important part in the mechanism of control over public administration in Great Britain. An attentive student may often learn from them of developments in Government activities as well as facts about many aspects of the country which are unobtainable elsewhere.

Perhaps the advantages of the Parliamentary Question as a device in Government are best appreciated by contrast with countries such as the

United States where they cannot arise owing to the absence from Congress (the U.S. Federal Legislative Assembly) of Executive officials or the political heads of the public departments who make up the Administration or the President's Cabinet. To take the place of Parliamentary Questions, Congressional Committees exist in the U.S.A. on a more extensive scale than Parliamentary Committees in this country, and public officials are more frequently called to them to testify at public hearings than they are in England.

The President of the United States who is not summoned by Congress has, since the days of President Roosevelt, held a weekly press conference at which he is exposed to a battery of inquisitive newspaper reporters. President Hoover also held such press conferences, but the fact for long was not supposed to be generally known. His replies to the pressmen's enquiries were reported as those of "a White House spokesman." The press were supposed to send in their questions in advance. With President Franklin Roosevelt, the White House press conferences became much more exciting affairs and the American system of official relations with the press were conducted upon less formal lines, allowing more scope for extempore improvisation than the British system with its useful device of the Parliamentary Question. President Truman adopted the policy of summoning the press only when he has some special news to announce.

Possibly because of the lack of a direct channel of communication with the electorate through the Legislature, the Federal Government departments in Washington developed their press relations earlier and on a more complete scale than has been evident in England. A great deal of information about public administration in England becomes available automatically by reason of the presence of Ministers in Parliament and the reports of what they say there, particularly in answers to questions which are reprinted in the national daily press.

(b) *In a debate upon the work of the department.* — The House of Commons often makes the application for money to run a Government Department an occasion for reviewing its work. Any member taking part in the debate can then comment, criticize or praise any aspect of the department's work. Such an occasion may be a true testing time of departmental performance and competence. There are almost certain to be some M.P.s who take a keen interest in the work of every department. Some may have held political office and have been responsible for conducting the department in the past. Others may have ambitions to become associated with it in such a capacity in the future. Many may feel deeply about its work purely because they are keenly conscious of its importance in the national life. A full dress debate upon any department responsible for social action in a field affecting vast groups

of the country's population such as the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Food, or Ministry of Health, is sure to evoke keen discussion. The same is true of debates on departments whose work involves economic matters vital to national welfare such as the Ministry of Fuel and Power or the Board of Trade.

Whenever the Government introduces proposals for new legislation by means of a Bill presented to Parliament, the department whose Minister is chiefly responsible for the passage of the Bill through Parliament is certain to become the target for a good deal of attention. The same result would occur if a private member succeeded in getting a hearing for a Bill of his own devising.

Some acquaintance with Parliamentary procedure upon Bills is necessary for a complete understanding of the relative importance of the discussions upon new measures in the First, Second and Third Readings and in the Standing Committee debates.

The reality of the influence which the House of Commons exerts upon administrative activities through its debates is naturally greater than that arising from Parliamentary Questions since the fate of departmental measures and activities depends upon Parliamentary decisions and a debate may involve a division which is a final expression of Parliamentary sovereignty.

(c) *Before Committees of the House of Commons.*—The Standing Committees upon Public Bills naturally do not come into operation unless a Bill presented to the House of Commons is assigned to them for review. Many departments of the Government, and those some of the most important, the Foreign Office, for example, may hardly ever present a Bill of sufficient importance to occasion a long debate upon their work.

There are now three Committees of the House of Commons, elected afresh at the beginning of every Session, whose work is of outstanding importance in the control of public administration. The first is the Select Committee on Estimates, the second is the Public Accounts Committee, and the third is the Select Committee on National Expenditure.

The respective spheres of the first two are indicated by their titles. The function of the Committee on National Expenditure is to consider "current expenditure defrayed out of moneys provided by Parliament for the Defence services, for Civil Defence, and for other Services directly connected with the war."

The Committee on Estimates operates before the departments are formally voted the funds for which they asked through the Chancellor of the Exchequer on Budget Day.

The Select Committee on Public Accounts looks at the record of actual expenditure by the departments and therefore operates after administrative action has been taken. So does the Select Committee on National

Expenditure. The Estimates and Accounts are annually published in five parts—Civil, Revenue Departments, Navy, Army and Air. The Appropriation Accounts are also published in the same five classes. There is in addition a special volume giving the financial results of the operation of certain trading or commercial services undertaken by public administration such as the conduct of the State-owned printing presses.

The Appropriation Accounts and the Trading Accounts and Balance Sheets are always published as audited accounts and they contain in addition to the figures the Reports of the Government auditor, the "Comptroller and Auditor-General", on them. This official deserves special mention in a review of the controls of public administration in Great Britain. His office dates from 1866, when two separate offices, one dealing with the receipt and issue of H.M. Exchequer controlling the flow of money into and from the public treasury, and another, the office of the Commissioners of Audit, which had been established in 1785, were amalgamated into one Office under the "Comptroller-General, of the receipt and issue of His Majesty's Exchequer and Auditor-General of Public Accounts." The Comptroller General, as he is usually known, and his Assistant have a very special status in British Public Administration. Like the Judges, they are appointed to hold their offices "during good behaviour," which means that they cannot be dismissed or removed save as a result of an Address to the Crown by both Houses of Parliament. Their salaries are charged on the Consolidated Fund and do not have to be voted afresh by Parliament every year. In other words, they are independent of the Executive. A few officials of the Exchequer and Audit Department are to be found tucked away in a room of their own in all the chief Government offices where they act as examiners of the department's accounts and papers and as liaison officers for the Comptroller and Auditor-General. If their presence and their enquiries are not feared, it is because every department is able to keep its own house in order and does not mind proving as much to any enquirer.

No Government agency, not even the Treasury itself, can obtain money unless the Comptroller-General is first satisfied that the demand is covered by a specific authority of Parliament. Such authority will usually be the annual Consolidated Fund Act or the Appropriation Act. [See the Charts on pp. (26) and (27)]. If the money is required for a fixed service, such as the payment of Judges' salaries, it will have been the subject of a Special Act of Parliament authorizing payment from the Consolidated Fund.

A second check is applied to all public expenditure by the Comptroller-General in the exercise of the second part of his functions, that of auditor. A running monthly audit is undertaken and before the end of every calendar year (*i.e.*, by December 31st) the full accounts of departmental

expenditure, or Appropriation Accounts, as they are called, must be presented complete up to the end of the previous financial year (*i.e.*, up to March 31st).

These Appropriation Accounts, divided<sup>3</sup> to correspond with the separate votes into which the Estimates had been split, are then presented to the House of Commons early in the succeeding year by the Comptroller and Auditor-General, who comments upon any irregularity his officers have discovered in them. The House refers them to its special Committee of Public Accounts by whom they are again examined in some detail. The Comptroller-General and the Treasury assist the Committee in its review and the Committee summons the departmental chiefs with their accounting officers, responsible for the expenditure made under each vote, to give an account of their stewardship and to explain some of the thousand-and-one details of administrative action, the immediate justification for which may not be at all clear to the lay mind. To emerge with credit from such an encounter is the natural ambition of every senior official subjected to the ordeal. Obviously they are not likely to be able to do so without a good memory for a mass of detail and a ready resource in defending their departments. By the time a senior administrative official reaches the summit of his career, he is unlikely to lack such qualifications and it is rare that the Public Accounts Committee completely bowl out the man they question on any important issue.

Occasionally departmental excuses have to be offered for errors of judgment, negligence or inaccuracy, which, if they are serious, draw stern comment from the Select Committee and possibly equally stern comment together with suggestions for remedial action when the Committee makes its report to the House of Commons.

The work of the Select Committee on Estimates and of the Committee on Public Accounts can be followed in detail in their reports, which in peace-time are printed and presented to the House of Commons as House of Commons Papers complete with the questions put to the departmental witnesses and their replies. Every student of public administration should be familiar with this source of information on departmental activity, which is often all the more valuable because many Government departments, including the more important, do not issue annual reports on their work (as almost without exception every United States Federal Government department or agency is required by law to do).

The Committee on Public Accounts has exercised a powerful influence in shaping administrative technique on its financial side. As irregularities and sources of error in departmental accounting were discovered by its examinations, which have gone on continually since 1857, so instructions

to the departments, usually by means of Treasury circulars, have been issued to warn accounting officers to amend this or that practice or to avoid this or that error in future. How comprehensive a body of doctrine has been evolved in this way will be evident to anyone who studies the "Epitome of the Reports from the Select Committees of Public Accounts, 1857-1925," published in 1926. [H.C. 161 of 1926.]

Valuable as the work of the Public Accounts Committee has undoubtedly been, complaint has nevertheless been heard in recent years that it could be more effective. In 1937 an hon. member became vocal on what he called "the perfunctory nature of its co-operation with this House," and pressed unsuccessfully for "the allotment of a day during this and every year to discuss the work and the reports of this committee and its officer, the Comptroller and Auditor-General." [House of Commons Debates, June 8th, 1937.] Such is the pressure of Parliamentary business that the House of Commons lately has not seemed to be able to find time to consider the findings of its own committees. The Select Committee on National Expenditure, for example, worked hard and produced a number of reports, but on two occasions only in the three years between 1940 and 1943 were their labours noticed by a debate in the House of Commons.

The device of appointing Select Committees is not in fact so useful as the theorists hold. There are at times severe criticisms of their work in the House of Commons, particularly if they attempt to debate questions of policy which is not their proper function. "It is easy," said one member on January 28th, 1943, "for these Select Committees to take on extraordinary powers in their own minds, and to think that they are select in more senses than one and that the preponderance of the brains of the House are incarnate in them." A more penetrating criticism of their influence was the suggestion made on the same occasion that interference by a House of Commons Committee in departmental matters would inevitably affect ministerial responsibility, since a weak or incompetent Minister would shelter behind the committee's recommendations for which he himself would assume no responsibility.

(d) *Before ad hoc Committees appointed by Parliament or by the Crown.* Parliament can at any time appoint a Select Committee to consider any topic falling within the entire range of social action and it frequently does so. Such Select Committees were a favourite device in the nineteenth century when, after a long slumber during the eighteenth century, the notion that public evils might be susceptible of some public remedies was once more revived. Few such enquiries can be made without bringing civil servants into them and some may be directed specifically to a problem in public administration leading directly to an investigation of departmental activities. Particularly is this true of the Reports of the

Select Committee on National Expenditure set up by the House of Commons in the Parliamentary Session of 1939-40. So nearly has this Select Committee touched upon problems of public administration and the Civil Service that it almost deserves a special section to itself in this review of Parliamentary controls over administration. The 16th Report from the Committee in the Session 1941-42, for example, reviewed the Organization and Control of the Civil Service with special attention to the work of the Treasury. [H.C. 120 of 1942.] In the following year the committee printed the Replies from Departments to Recommendations in Reports [H.C. 79 of 1943] so giving the administration an opportunity to state its reasoned comments upon their recommendations for the information of the House.

Occasionally there are searching reviews by departmental committees or Royal Commissions. In times of acute financial crisis such enquiries may be on a comprehensive scale and result in a considerable upheaval in the administrative sphere. Some may be designed to produce a "shake-up" throughout the Civil Service such as the rapid review of the whole field of public expenditure made by the "Committee on National Expenditure" of 1922. Responsible financial opinion was then thoroughly alarmed, as it well might have been, by the catastrophic cost of the war of 1914-18. A violent agitation for sweeping reductions in expenditure and for cuts in taxation sprang up after the war, fanned to fever-heat by certain sections of the press. It led the Government to agree that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should set up the committee. It was asked to "make recommendations for effecting forthwith all possible reductions in the national expenditure . . . and to indicate the economies which might be effected if particular policies were either adopted, abandoned or modified." They were asked to aim at recommending reductions amounting to £100 millions in all. The committee went to work with a will and its three reports were referred to as the "Geddes axe" rather than as the "Geddes Reports," as most committee reports are known, by the names of their chairman (in this case Sir Eric Campbell Geddes). It spoke as it was asked to do, in reductions by millions of pounds—£21 millions to come off the Navy Estimates, £20 millions from the Army, £18 millions from Education, and proportionate reductions from other Services.

The committee soon came up against the hard fact that the greater part of the public expenditure of the country (£710 millions out of £1,146 millions) "in the main is outside the effective control of the administrative machine." Of this hard core of unavoidable outlay were such sums as £345 millions for payment of interest on the national debt, £153 millions for pensions and £21 millions to meet statutory charges on the Consolidated Fund.



The committee found nearly £87 millions which they thought could be saved and hoped that the remaining odd £13 millions might come from reductions in naval and military expenditure. [Their Reports were published in 1922 as Cmd. 1581, 1582 and 1589.]

In a brief six months they had ranged throughout the field of government activity. They were unable to examine every department in detail in so short a time but the pressure they set up naturally caused every department to examine its own establishment and many were the cuts and savings thereby effected. An economy drive goes on all the time in government departments. The establishment and accounting officers are practised at the game and they do not need the periodical Treasury circulars notifying Their Lordships' anxiety about the mounting level of public expenditure. It is an old anxiety. The Treasury building in Whitehall during the war of 1939-45 was twice rendered uninhabitable by what were euphemistically known as "incidents," but few old civil servants will believe that German bombs could expel one shade by which they are sure it is haunted, that of Mr. Gladstone. Civil servants whom the war has, in common with many of their fellow citizens, deprived of a third to nearly a half of their incomes and made a mockery of much that was left, are not likely to quarrel with the Grand Old Man's principle that it is better to let money fructify in the pockets of the people than to seize it by taxation. But few people to-day, civil servants included, are driven by the same obsession which made him almost by instinct look at every subject under the sun from the standpoint of its probable effect upon the size of the national debt or its probable effect upon the level of taxation. Admirers of Gladstonian principles of finance may lament that lately the spirit of Mr. Micawber, hopefully believing that something is sure to turn up, rather than that of the Grand Old Man, is in the ascendant in official quarters. Actually, there is little fear that those responsible for the public finances of the country are ever likely to disregard the debit side of the national balance sheet upon which the expenditure for public administration occurs. It may take a crisis to stimulate a special overhaul. Nine years after the "Geddes axe" sank deeply into some Whitehall structures, a new financial and economic depression proceeding steadily eastwards from Wall Street, New York, enveloped the United Kingdom and the whole of Europe in its fog and gloom. Depression means economy and a cry for economy means a thorough review of public expenditure upon which a committee was duly set up. It reported in 1931. [The "May" Committee on National Expenditure, Cmd. 3920.]

On the whole it may be expected that such committees, which are given little time for their task, are likely to be less effective as agents for controlling or amending administrative practice in detail than as

advisers to the Cabinet upon ways in which money can be saved by changes or reversals in policy. They are, in other words, effective at the policy or political level rather than at the Civil Service or administrative level.

### III. PRESSURE GROUPS AS AGENCIES OF ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROL

A "pressure group" is an American name for a section of the public organized and active in the pursuit of the special interests which its members join to promote. Like the word "bureaucracy," the words "pressure group" carry a certain sinister implication for they are often used to denote a group of people pushing their own claims in disregard, and often at the expense of others. Politically, a pressure group emerges as a "lobby" in the corridors of the legislative assembly, but it rarely stops there. It is very unlikely to neglect an appeal to public administration as well as to the legislature, and to public opinion over the heads of both legislature and administration. In principle there is nothing wrong about such activities provided that they do not sink to underhand and questionable methods. In practice it is regrettably true that certain pressure groups have selfishly sought sectional benefits at the expense of the community as a whole. Democratic progress would be far more rapid in all probability if there were more enthusiasts like the people who make up pressure groups, particularly the non-profit-making kind. *Vigilantibus non dormientibus iura subveniunt*, says one of the legal maxims (p. 15). Heaven helps those who help themselves, and so often does the Government, in accordance with the deep saying "to him who hath shall be given." Such is the law of life and it is truly childish to suppose that it can be otherwise, because for the benefit of children alone is that law in abeyance. If it were not so there would be far fewer special societies and associations.

Not all the fifteen hundred different principal British societies, associations and institutions from the Royal Academy and British Association, down the alphabet to the Youth Hostels Association and the Zionist Association of Great Britain and Ireland are lobbyists, although many of them are very active and others potentially active.

A considerable amount of research would be necessary before even an approximate estimate could be made of the part played by pressure groups in this country, for they have never been enumerated, surveyed and assessed. There is no reason to suppose that their influence is negligible for they can mostly be sure of a hearing and they are usually persistent.

Factual studies of pressure groups are rare in any country, although in this, as in other fields of public administration, there have been one or two important contributions from the United States. In a careful

study of "Pressure Politics in New York," published in 1937, Miss Belle Zeller went so far as to declare that "the process of government has become a group process in which organized minorities have become so closely identified with the formal governmental structure itself as to constitute a real centre of political power." Whether matters have gone so far over the whole range of the Federal Government of the United States, or of the National Government of Great Britain, as they appeared to have done in the administration of a single State confining its operations to purely domestic issues, may be doubted. But whatever the verdict on this question may be, there is undoubtedly much force in Miss Zeller's generalization. She shows that the methods used by the pressure groups include direct attacks upon administrators and legislators by means of a lavish use of the Federal mails for letters, pamphlets, reports and periodicals; indirect attack on the general public, legislators and administrators alike through tactics aimed at influencing newspapers, the radio and the schools and by buying advertisement space. Evidence of one unsavoury aspect of lobbying technique is no longer so notorious as apparently it once had been in the government of New York State.

"Outright bribery of legislators is perhaps no longer common," writes Miss Zeller (p. 239), although she adds that "it has been shown that legislators are ambitious and poorly paid, and have much to gain from wealthy groups in a material way through favours, retainers and contributions to campaign funds [*i.e.*, election expenses]. We know enough about the contents and the enforcement of corrupt practices legislation to realize that it is no difficult task for a legislator to defeat the purposes of such laws without being detected."

Substitute the words "administrators" or "public officials" for "legislators" in this passage and the extent of the danger to good administration at once becomes apparent.

Fortunately it is a danger to which public administration in Great Britain no longer succumbs. The words "no longer" are required to indicate that it was not always so in these Islands, although it is necessary to go back to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to find examples of indiscreet as well as of discreet bribery of the public service. The nineteenth century was on the whole pure from this taint, to judge from the record of the purchasing and contracting departments of the administration which are the areas usually subjected to the greatest temptations.

Mention of the influence of the "social lobby" points to a force less tangible but by no means negligible. The high value mankind puts upon "social distance" has always been very evident, although as a sociological phenomenon it has not yet had the study it deserves. To abridge this "social distance" by admitting legislators or administrators

into the charmed circles, within which the socially great move on terms of easy intimacy, is to use a potent force of attraction. The love of fame, a universal passion, to borrow the title of some eighteenth-century verses, may be the last infirmity of a noble mind, but we show small signs of rising superior to it. "The social lobby in Washington is the most dangerous of all," according to the view of one member of the U.S. House of Representatives in 1935. It is principally dangerous to members of the legislature as all lobbys are, for few of them are likely to spend as much energy in cultivating the administrators as they devote to the political leaders who are the administrators' masters. Nevertheless, lobbyists will not be unknown in government offices, and the public servant has to be on his guard lest the "pungent sense of reality" accompanying the personal, oral and often urgently persuasive tones of the vigorous special pleader cause him to get his perspectives of the principle of public responsibility [No. 2 above] somewhat awry. The dangers are the greater if it is true, as it has been said in the United States, that "the future of many civil servants, particularly the ablest and most enterprising, lies not in the federal service but in the private employ of the groups with which their official duties bring them into contact" [*Public Administration and the Public Interest*, by E. P. Herring, p. 22]. In England a similar danger is not unknown. A *cause célèbre* laid it bare when no less a person than the permanent secretary of a major Government department was dismissed from the service for confusing his official duties with his private ambitions for a well-paid business post. [Cmd. 5254.] The average British civil servant, in a career service with security of tenure, is not so likely to be led astray. In cases of temptation the civil servant has a sure shield in the rule of law which he administers and to which he has only to point in order to drive home the fact that the answers to his caller's problems must be sought in the pronouncements of constituted authority and that to amend them does not lie within his power.

There is no other effective line of defence. It drives the lobbyist ultimately to seek means of altering the law. The legislators then have to deal with him, and they too are not without powerful protecting armour. In the United States, where the lobbyists' influence has assumed the dimensions of a public problem, efforts have been made to control it by law in a number of the States but not in the Federal capital, where there were said to have been about 6,000 lobbyists in 1939. The laws admittedly do not solve the problem. Perhaps that is why a call is heard from time to time for more and better laws. In some States with more picturesque political traditions the demand occasionally takes strange forms. On July 5th, 1936, *The Times* correspondent in New York reported that a Bill passed by both Houses of the Legislature of Louisiana required that lobbyists should wear a uniform to include gaudy

plaid trousers and a green skull cap and to divide with members of the Senate any emoluments they may receive as lobbyists in excess of \$10 a day. Since the prevention of undue pressures is largely a matter of the right atmosphere in government circles, remedies of the Louisiana, or what may perhaps be called the Gilbert and Sullivan type, may yet have a greater part to play than theorists trained in the tradition of Edmund Burke or of Mr. Gladstone might be prepared to concede.

The sinister side of lobbying has not, therefore, lacked attention in the United States. The positive, constructive and valuable aspect of the lobby has attracted less interest. Miss Zeller, in her survey of the situation in the State of New York quoted above, does indeed say that "under our existing constitutional and economic system pressure groups are indispensable, despite the fact that many New York State Legislators tend to minimize and under-estimate the constructive part played by these groups." Suspicion is clearly justified as a first reaction to all special pleadings for legislative or administrative favours and the old question *cui bono*, "who benefits?" is the first to put to all who appeal for special consideration for some pet scheme of their own. The answer may often be very satisfactory from the point of view of the public. Special groups, particularly the professional and technical groups, are frequently the first to acquire a knowledge of new and valuable forms of social transformation and they act as spear-heads in the cause of progress by stating the case for their adoption. The novelties may be such that public officials can adopt them without requiring legislative action. The revolution in standards of nutrition which social historians will regard as marking a new era in the history of mankind was accepted in administrative circles and given practical application by being translated into dietary scales in public institutions, hospitals, prisons, schools and barracks without it being necessary for legislators to pass laws authorizing the use of vitamins and other accessory food factors.

Administrative technicians must ever be capable of sufficient imaginative insight and practical adaptability to see that early use is made of established discoveries and inventions of this type. The need for such alertness becomes progressively the greater as administrative controls extend wider over social activities.

The essential thing to remember about pressure groups is surely their potentiality for co-operation in achieving desirable kinds of social transformation. From this point of view the societies and institutions are forms of the specialization and division of human energies by which, as we have so frequently insisted in this work, society is maintained. The healthy attitude towards them in this view of the matter is clearly one of co-operation. Where co-operation with them is impossible by reason of their limited or frankly anti-social purposes, we are in the presence of

a pathological condition. Subject to the possibility of detecting and eliminating the undesirable pressure groups, it is clear, therefore, that administration can learn much from the rest and often be guided by them as they would be by any other responsible "staff" agency. [See comment on principle 5.]

#### IV. PUBLIC OPINION AS AN AGENCY OF ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROL

If they are mentioned last, it is with no intention to minimize the influence of the opinions of the great general public upon administrative action. Public administration is, in fact, itself a creature of public opinion, unlikely to transcend its creator in depth of vision and insight except on marginal matters. That is to say, here and there public administration will be ahead of public opinion in its views of desirable social transformations. Concentration upon the difficult task of bridging such temporary gaps may magnify their dimensions. Looked at relatively to the broad identity of viewpoint and attitude, observable both in public opinion and public administration, such differences shrink almost to insignificance. The reason is plain. The public official is also a citizen, and he mixes with his fellow-men in his home, in clubs, restaurants and trains, in social life and in his hobbies and recreations. He has been to the same schools or colleges, he reads the same newspapers, listens to the same radio programmes, and goes to the same cinemas as they do. He is bathed in the same stream of influence and he is unlikely, at least in a country of orderly social evolution and remarkably high social cohesion and homogeneity such as England, to emerge from it with a mental outlook noticeably different from that of the rest of his countrymen. They, therefore, rarely worry much about the broad framework of public administration. The weight of public opinion is consequently rarely mobilized. "Publics are indifferent to questions of governmental machinery save when the machinery works in such a way as to outrage opinion," is a verdict which everybody must agree to be a true statement of the facts. [From an article on "Reorganization" in the U.S. "Political Science Quarterly." Vol. LIII, p. 167.]

Public attention will therefore be directed upon the marginal differences and there can be no doubt that they can be important and troublesome, giving rise to real problems of adjustment between official and citizen. Reference to the Principle of Public Relations [Principle 6] later will indicate the most promising way in which mutual comprehension can be achieved and will show that the "public relations" activity, when conceived as a two-way relationship, affords a valuable channel through which public attitudes may induce administrative changes.

In the last resort the final word remains with the public in all democratic countries, since they are the electorate by whom the whole mechan-

ism of government must be set in motion. Indirectly, therefore, and in the long run, the public controls public administration absolutely and completely. In the short run it is able to act by a direct contact with administrative units, which goes on all the time, and also by invoking pressure on the administration by setting in motion any of the other external controls enumerated above, particularly members of Parliament and the Press. This question of the relations between public opinion and public administration relates to a little explored problem, although it is one of fundamental importance. It cannot be dismissed in a paragraph or two even in an introductory work such as the present, and some of the many highly important and difficult aspects of it will be reserved for further mention in the final chapter of this volume.

#### SELECTED LIST OF BOOKS AND PERIODICAL ARTICLES ILLUSTRATING CHAPTER V

See also the Book Lists at the end of Chapter II

Institute of Public Administration. Staff Reports in the Public Service Research Studies in Administration. 1936.

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*Periodical Articles*

Principles of Higher Control. J. T. Foxell. P.A. XVII. 3.

Measurement of Staff Output in Chemical Work. Myra Curtis, Marion Bills and P. L. Dickson. P.A. XV. 3.

Finance and Administrative Control. A. J. Waldegrave. P.A. XIII. 3.

The Efficiency of Efficiency Rating Systems. Winifred S. Raphael. P.A. XI. 1.

A Few Thoughts on the Control of a Large Staff. Lt.-Col. A. J. McCarraher. P.A. XIII. 2.

Efficiency as an Alternative to Control. Sir H. N. Bunbury and others. P.A. VI. 2.



## CHAPTER VI

### PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND PRIVATE ENTERPRISE

THE methods of private enterprise or business, as it is generally called, and government are often compared and contrasted in a way intended to show business in a more favourable light than government, particularly from the point of view of efficiency. If the principles set out above are true principles of public administration, they should be able to show clearly what the similarities and differences between government and business really are and perhaps go some way towards explaining how they arise.

#### (1) POLITICAL DIRECTION

Looking back upon the principles of public administration in order, it is plain that a fundamental difference is immediately thrown into high relief by the first principle. Business, unlike public administration, is not subjected to political direction save in times of the gravest emergency when nothing but national mobilization can meet the threat or the reality of war. Principle 1, and the sub principles or corollaries 1.01 to 1.10, may be the first principles of public administration but they have no relevance to business. The objectives of business do not depend on, neither are they authorized by, political decisions. The ends it pursues are those of its own devising. Business initiative need not be limited, as administrative initiative must be. The governmental structure of a country is merely incidental in business operations.

It is true that business may, and usually does, help to secure social transformations, but they are not orderly transformations in the sense that they are planned as a part of wider schemes for society as a whole. Business is planned for the profit of those conducting it ; its service to the community is a by-product of profit seeking. When business operations offer the possibility of new social forms they arise by accident ; certainly not because business men have first asked themselves " How can mankind or society be improved ? "

No slight upon business is concealed in these remarks. The " case for " public administration cannot be built upon any scorn of the motives and methods of business, particularly in a society predominantly dependent as ours has been upon business, or upon what Herbert Spencer, who feared public administration, called " the principle of voluntary co-operation," as distinct from the " compulsory co-operation " imposed through public administration.

## (2) PUBLIC RESPONSIBILITY

It would be a gratuitous insult to infer that business has no responsibility towards the public. Good business practice is careful that the public come to no harm as a result of business dealings. Slogans about "service" and the customer being always right, show that business is alive to the supreme importance of not cutting its own throat by anti-social practices. Nevertheless, as the general public has all too frequently been reminded as a result of strikes, "go-slow" movements, lock-outs and by the exaction of monopoly profits, the business world puts what it conceives to be its own interests above those of the community in a way no public administration would dream of doing. Business may sabotage the beneficent operation of the social principle of the division of labour by such practices. Public administration may never do so.

But the second principle of public administration, the principle of public responsibility, means very much more than the avoidance of a public mischief. The statement of this principle and its corollaries reveal public administration bound hand and foot to public tasks in a way which makes business seem fancy-free by comparison. The comment on the second principle drew attention to the fact that here the essential contrast is to be seen between private enterprise and public enterprise. To this source in particular may be traced the ponderous, slow-moving nature of public administrative methods in comparison with the possibility of quick decision and swift action enjoyed by a business man who is not responsible to the taxpayers and does not have to answer in detail for his actions to their elected representatives. A government department does not serve purposes of its own devising for its own greater ease, convenience and profit. It would do so only on pain of being denounced, and very properly denounced, as a bureaucracy. A business enterprise would be regarded as quixotic if it allowed any considerations other than that of its own ultimate, if not immediate profit to weigh with it. The reason is, of course, the obvious one that businesses cease to exist when they can no longer earn profits. A business need not worry overmuch about uniformity in treatment. It can cater for various special needs and purposes, charging often "what the traffic will bear," without raising the storm of public protest which would immediately arise if in government one law were devised for the benefit of the rich and another for the poor.

Every business man can be an idealist and work for the common good, but he must always be a careerist. Public officials must be team-workers; they cannot play for their own hand. They must co-operate with each other and with other departments, not try to score points off the other fellow in a way which might very likely not be out of place in the business world.

The public responsibilities of business men (as distinct from their private responsibilities) do not require them to keep elaborate records of the grounds and reasons for their judgments or full accounts of their actions. They are not expected, as public administration is, to be consistent in their procedure, to have a settled line of policy and to stick to it. Where administrative acts are not already bound by prior legislative directions, as they often are, it still remains necessary for public policy and administrative action to build up a coherent whole into which all special actions and decisions can fit with logical and understandable propriety. Consequently, administration must proceed in the light of general decisions applicable to wide areas of operation. It cannot improvise freely from day to day as it goes along as business men can do.

### (3) SOCIAL NECESSITY

Without business enterprise as a whole, civilization as we have known it would no doubt break down, but of no single business enterprise is this true. Consequently the Principle of Social Necessity, which has been seen to be essential to justify the work of all the units of public administration, has no application in its strict sense to the units of business enterprise.

This principle also draws attention [3.03] to the marked difference in the content of business and administrative balance sheets ; the former governed entirely by quantitative monetary measurement, the latter paying more regard to the quality of life and being able therefore to deal with social evils which business neglects and sometimes augments or even creates.

Principles 1 to 3 of Public Administration serve, therefore, to distinguish business and government, as they should be distinguished and to mark off their separate spheres and modes of operation. With these distinctions firmly in mind, it is possible to turn towards the essential similarities between business and government. These are clearly revealed by the statement of the remaining principles of public administration.

### (4) EFFICIENCY

The Principle of Efficiency might be transferred with little alteration to any business manual with the word "business" substituted for "public administration." Much of what business men understand by operating efficiency is just as relevant to public administration as to business. When dissatisfied taxpayers demand a business man's government, it usually means that they think the administration to be deficient in one or more of the requirements postulated under this principle. They may be right, but there are people with contrary opinions. "I was

25 years in private enterprise ; I have known a great many civil servants ; and I am not of opinion that in private business the standard of efficiency is any higher than in the Civil Service. I have seen business men just as stupid as any civil servants could be alleged to be. Some successful business men have just been successful gamblers." Such was the testimony of one Member of Parliament in the House of Commons on January 28th, 1943. [Debates, p. 652.] One testimony may prove little, but at least indicates that there are two sides to the clamour for "a business man's government." To call for the "commercialization" or "industrialization" of the whole machinery of government in the belief that business is conducted upon a level of efficiency superior to that of public administration would be to take a very partial one-sided view of the question. It would be to indulge in the primitive magic of mistaking a label or a name for reality. It should be evident by now that public administration as a whole involves more than the principle of efficiency alone can provide. Nevertheless, there are obvious reasons why public attention should concentrate upon the success or failure of public administration to meet the requirements of this one principle alone.

The label "business efficiency" can cover enough to satisfy those who use it as a battle cry. There are, moreover, undoubtedly wide areas of operation wherein principles common to both business and administration can be developed and applied. Particularly is this evident from an examination of principles 4.031 to 4.038. The functions to which these principles apply are naturally different. Except to some small extent in State trading services such as the Post Office and H.M. Stationery Office, public administration is not much concerned with the often vital interests of business to attract customers by improving the product by new designs, by the introduction of colour in printing and packaging. [But compare the old and new "greetings telegrams, the attempt of the Post Office before 1939 to revive old customs such as "Valentines" in order to increase postal traffic. Compare the effort of H.M. Stationery Office to improve the appearance of Government publications before the introduction of advertising specialists into the Ministry of Information transformed them by a yet more professional touch.] Many other problems which figure largely in business calculations such as price-making, export management, raising capital, providing for depreciation and obsolescence, and for insurance, are unknown in public administration.

From the employment point of view the difference is equally striking. Staff representation through the departmental Whitley Councils is a very different thing from collective bargaining in industry where trade unions and employers confront each other with the ever-present threat

of "sanctions" in the form of strikes and lock-outs. Public administration is also debarred from using differential wage payments as incentives to increase production or to attract staff of superior ability from rival firms into its own employment. It is more likely to lose staff and to suffer by the ability of business houses to wield such attractions at its expense. There are no sums set aside in public administration for special bonuses as there appear to be in some businesses at Christmas time. Then also in the old pre-war days wine and spirit merchants, cigar merchants, poulterers, and other purveyors of luxury goods, experienced their annual boom in trade, largely aided by orders from business houses on behalf of their friends and special clients.

Differences of these kinds are real enough but they should not obscure the wide field over which broad economic principles apply equally to business and to public administration.

A corollary to this principle, which is reinforced by the preceding principles, although it has not perhaps had the emphasis it deserves, is the justice of the reciprocal claim of public administration to be treated as favourably as business when it has to ask for financial support to enable it to perform the tasks required of it.

Taxpayers traditionally regard expenses of government as unjust exactions. Memories reaching back to the earliest days of recorded history justify this tradition. That many should toil, sweat and struggle in poverty in order that a few in positions of command might lead lives of ease and luxury has been an almost inexorable law of human nature in both East and West from the first Semitic dynasty of Kish in Babylonia down to the era of Hitler and Goering in the third German Reich. The advent of the modern democratic State has progressively reduced the use of taxation to sustain privilege and inequality. The advent of the social service State has changed the whole nature of taxation by greatly expanding the notion that public benefits can be procured by redistributing national income through the mechanism of public administration. Nowadays the very real services of public order, security, health, education and the enjoyment of amenities such as parks, libraries and museums are freely available to everyone. In fact, they are not really "free" because all pay for them according to their means except only the shirkers, wasters, the inefficient or those unable to pay by reason of age or infirmity. The public attitude towards taxation can no longer remain what it justifiably was while Israelites were groaning under the Egyptian lash or while the Sicilians were being bled white by Verres.

The money now spent by way of taxation on publicly provided services and amenities stands in no different financial relation to the consuming public than their guineas spent on cinema shows, theatre tickets, permanent waves or ice-creams, except that as far as value for money goes

the publicly provided services are usually more economically administered and carry proportionately smaller overhead costs than the profit-earning private enterprises. The striking difference in peoples' attitudes to each are shown in several ways. There is the already noticed difference in the willingness to pay for the publicly provided and for the privately provided services. Public benefits still seem to many in the nature of a somewhat degrading dole. On the other hand, to obtain more than one is strictly entitled to get at public expense rarely seems to be regarded, as it should be regarded, as morally no different from shoplifting.

The new attitude needed may perhaps be indicated by reversing, as we legitimately may, the current complaint that taxation leaves people with less to spend on entertainment or immediately enjoyable consumption. It is true that taxation has this effect, but it is equally true that expenditure on entertainment and luxury leaves people less to spend on public health, security and welfare. By way of support for a somewhat novel way of looking at the matter, it is perhaps allowable to predict that future historians of British public administration will record that Government enterprises, particularly in the period 1920-1939, were starved of capital and on the whole inadequately financed. "Starvation" and "inadequacy" are relative terms, and if some external comparisons are required to give them meaning, it should be sufficient to point, not to the cost of a battleship which so frequently did service until the pacifists themselves howled for more battleships in 1939, but to the national investment during the same period in such matters as cinemas, dog-track racing establishments and football pools as some among the many competitors for public support which proved more successful in attracting public interest than opportunities to make the British environment healthier, happier, tidier, more efficient and more beautiful.

#### (5) ORGANIZATION

The principle of organization, analysed as the Fifth Principle, is also obviously relevant to business, particularly to business operating on a large scale. The theory of organization, devised in practice by armies, was first analysed and formulated by business specialists and it has since been reapplied to publicly provided services. As it will be seen in the next chapter, however, the principle of organization has social consequences in the realm of public administration of far greater influence than in the realm of competitive industry.

#### (6) PUBLIC RELATIONS

The principle of public relations set out as the Sixth Principle is borrowed outright from the business world where it was first developed as a method of meeting the first essential of business, namely, to win

customers. Its full application in the world of public administration has not yet been secured. An administrative novelty, it is suspect in some quarters and barely acknowledged elsewhere as the constructive contributing factor it will yet be found to be.

It is not to be expected, of course, that public relations in public administration will ever take the same form as merchandising and salesmanship in private enterprise where it is concerned with such things as window displays, free samples, packaging, design and colour of labels and containers, and the maintenance and control of a sales force. Public relations has a narrower content in administration than in business, but generically it is of the same order of operations. More will be said about it in the final chapter.

#### (7) PROGRESS

Businesses evolve, grow and progress by virtue of the inner forces creating and sustaining them just as administration is apt to do. Consequently the seventh principle of evolution and progress is a principle common to both business and administration although its formulation necessarily differs somewhat in each case. The possibility of spectacular growth and expansion with the negotiation of mergers, combines or cartels which are open to business is naturally not available in public administration.

#### (8) RESEARCH

It is evident that business has a great deal to gain by providing for that research which the Eighth Principle proclaims to be necessary in the field of government and administration, as it is indeed in practically every sphere of human activity.

As in the matter of public relations, the value of research had received greater practical recognition in the sphere of business than in public administration, and it is only in our own time that it is beginning to become an unquestionably accepted feature of public administration.

With this brief characterization of the essential differences and similarities between government and business the subject might be left. There is, however, so much muddled thought and mistaken opinion abroad upon the respective places of private and public enterprise that it is desirable to point to some other relevant but often neglected considerations affecting the main issues involved.

In the first place, the pressure to extend the range of government enterprise at the expense of private enterprise does not come exclusively from public officials. In fact, it rarely comes from them. The notion that the creation of the modern police force, educational system, postal services, fire-fighting services and social security code was craftily

devised by public servants as a means of magnifying their importance in society, increasing their numbers or augmenting their incomes, is ludicrous.

Secondly, uncritical acceptance of the notion that power in modern society is wielded solely by government needs very considerable revision in the light of the structure of business enterprise in any particular country. The experience of Americans, true to the Jeffersonian tradition of preventing the concentration of power in their country from falling into a few hands, has its illustration in the determined fight they have made to prevent large-scale industrial and commercial monopolies controlling their economic system. "Power," it has been said, "is no less 'political' for being labelled 'economic' power; for politics is but the science of 'who gets what, when and how.' " Consequently there is as much need to consider the desirability of inducing a more responsible or "public-administration-minded" attitude in some forms of business as there is a more business like attitude in public administration.

This leads to the third consideration, which is the seamy side of business. It is no doubt true that just as all forms of public administration cannot be condemned by being regarded as no better than the worst among them, so business as a whole cannot be judged by the behaviour of the scoundrels, thieves and robbers who have taken advantage of public credulity to set themselves up in the guise of businessmen. The unsavoury side of business enterprise belongs to the study of public administration in the first place because the public have demanded legal remedies (that is, administrative protection) against the damage and losses they have sustained, and in the second place because only by taking account of the negative anti-social aspects of business can a balanced picture be obtained of the respective roles of business and administration in society.

It is, for example, necessary that the depressing record of administrative shortcomings in the nineteenth century should not be considered out of all relation to the far more shocking record of the performance of thousands of business enterprises by whom the British public were cheated, robbed and murdered during the same period. The long story of commercial failures, fraudulent company promotions, bucket-shops, bank swindles, from the time of the South Sea Bubble to the days of Mr. Horatio Bottomley has not been fully recorded. A merciful oblivion covers such exploits as those of Walter Watts and his frauds on the Globe Assurance Office, the Crystal Palace forgeries perpetrated by William James Robson, the story of the Royal British Bank and of the London and Eastern Banking Corporation to name but four of the hundreds of swindles from the long record of bankruptcy and disaster which darkened the economic annals of the nineteenth century. The



company laws have been strengthened and the banking system of the country has been put beyond the reach of miscreants responsible for such calamities, but these controls were bought at a very high price in private loss and ruin.

Similarly, the shocking history of patent medicines and of food adulteration, by which many lives were imperilled or cut short, is now all but a thing of the past, thanks largely to the tardy remedies put into the hands of public administration.

Although the worst evils are thereby countered, many minor sources of loss remain, as anyone may discover for himself who is prepared to take an interest in the literature of the consumers' research movement in the United States, in the proceedings before the U.S. Federal Trade Commission, the British Commissioners for Bankruptcy or the more sensational events staged from time to time in the Central Criminal Court.

If it is unnecessary to dwell upon this negative side of business achievement because its positive contribution has been so overwhelmingly great, the same is proportionately true of public administration. Neither can be better than their human material will allow. Both, obviously, have their own problems to face and with this brief attempt to show them in their proper perspectives and dimensions we may turn to the question of ways of improving public administration. Reference must first be made, however, to one novelty in public administration which has aroused considerable discussion.

#### PUBLIC CORPORATIONS

In recent years there has been elaborated in England a sort of half-way house between Government and Business, the public enterprise, usually in the form of a public corporation. It sells, or supervises the sale of, goods and services to the public just as any business would do, but unlike a business it is responsible to the public and it does not earn profits for shareholders. It aims at providing its benefits at the lowest cost. It is unlike a government department in that it does not possess taxing power nor is it managed by a Minister sitting in Parliament. It is almost inevitable that the people to manage it are appointed by the Government of the day ; indeed it is difficult to see how, under democratic theory, any other method of appointment would be desirable. The aim and purpose of this new device is mainly to undertake on public account tasks of general public utility or necessity which public opinion no longer considers should be conducted for private profit. At the same time, to avoid encumbering the central administration with new units, they are located at several removes from the machinery of government, or as it is sometimes said, they are placed "outside politics." The aim in

creating them is to make the best of both worlds by combining responsibility to the public [Principle 2] with business enterprise. They consequently make an indifferent appeal to the legislator [who does not like public organizations free from the effective control of a Minister whom he can tackle in the House of Commons] and both to the civil servant [who finds some of their salary scales and expense allowances differ from his own] and the business man [who does not begin with any marked sympathy towards public control in any form]. They have, in particular, been criticized for not publishing reports and financial accounts in sufficient detail to enable any judgment to be made of their operating efficiency. Why, it is asked, should not their accounts be subject to audit and publication by the Comptroller General (page 120) as are those of Government Trading concerns? To refuse to do so on the ground that the Public Corporations are commercial organizations is to ignore the fact that they are also monopolies. Moreover, they are monopolies owned and created by the very people, the British public, who have a vital concern in their economy and efficiency. The controls exercised over the Civil Service, and described in Chapter V, do not yet apply at all deeply to these Public Corporations. It remains to be seen whether they will vindicate for themselves an assured position in the years to come. One public enterprise, the Forestry Commission, became an ordinary Government Department in 1945.

The central idea enshrined in such public corporations undoubtedly has very considerable attraction for all who wish to be able to benefit by the greater economic contribution to social welfare generally provided by large-scale units of production.

They furthermore possess the attraction that they offer a means of decentralizing an already overburdened central authority. It is an attraction likely to become the greater as the powers and duties of the central authority expand, for as it will be demonstrated in the following chapter, the operation of the principle of organization makes very heavy demands upon administrative competence, even if it is not true, as some critics have tried to pretend, that further expansion of publicly organized enterprises must inevitably be along totalitarian lines.

#### SELECTED LIST OF BOOKS AND PERIODICAL ARTICLES

##### ILLUSTRATING CHAPTER VI

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Bellman, Sir Harold. The Traditions of the Public Services. Can they be extended to Business? P.A. XIV. 2.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE PROGRESS OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

WITH this chapter we reach the second of the only two questions which are likely to lead anyone to study the principles of public administration. The first is "What is public administration for?" and the second, "How can it be improved?" The previous chapters will have been a waste of time if they have not already provided some help in answering these essential questions and particularly the second. A sketch of the occupational diseases of administration, with special reference to the most dangerous of them all, the disease of bureaucracy, has been given in Chapters III and IV, and it was followed by a survey of the means by which public administration is defended against them and, if necessary, cured of them by internally and externally applied remedies.

It is not the pathology of administration which is alone in question. Handling administrative diseases is one thing; helping administration to keep fit and to go on becoming fitter is another and more important task. Success in it, like individual health and well-being, will be achieved by following a proper regimen or way of life. If the principles of public administration described in this volume are what they purport to be, they should surely go far towards providing the outlines of just this body of wisdom which is required. They have been tested already when they were used in the discussion about the dangers of bureaucracy [Chapter IV] and in the last chapter, to delimit the respective spheres of, and to illuminate the contrast between, business and government.

Just as they were able to deal comprehensively with these questions and to display them systematically, so they may be expected to point to the ways in which administrative progress may be achieved. They may also show, what is well worth doing, where it is unnecessary to look for aid and so succeed in concentrating energy upon the vital places where alone real returns for effort may be expected.

#### (1) THE LEGISLATURE AS A SOURCE OF REFORM IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Reviewing the principles again in their order, it is evident from the first principle that the main responsibility for better administration rests upon the Legislature. This fact appeared clearly in the discussion of the possible abuse of any powers delegated to public administration to allow it to legislate and to adjudicate within strictly delimited fields of its own.

The loud cries of panic about administrative encroachment upon the

government as a result of these administrative activities were shown to be false alarms as long as public administration occupies the place assigned to it by the first principle.

Not only so, but the path of progress points to the desirability and inevitability of more and more delegation of powers to administrative rule-making and adjudicating authority. To deny such an assertion is plainly to misconceive the nature of modern government. To fear its acceptance is to cast doubts, not so much upon the competence or honesty of administration as upon the ability and energy of the legislature and of the courts to perform their tasks and to live up to their higher calling.

The question whether the external control of public administration provided by Parliament can become more effective is reviewed elsewhere in this work [particularly in Section 4 of this Chapter and in Chapters V and VIII] and it will suffice to refer to the discussion in those places. Clearly it is to a large degree a question for Parliament rather than for the administration. The plea for more Parliamentary Committees of review and for more effective work from those already existing, such as the Select Committee on Estimates and the Public Accounts Committee of the House of Commons, has been met in part by the work of the Select Committee on National Expenditure. The creation of separate Parliamentary Committees to supervise the work of each major department has some superficial attraction but it is difficult to reconcile either with the doctrine of Ministerial and Cabinet responsibility or with the doctrine of unified command [Principle 5]. At best they would be advisory bodies but such a function is probably best left to Parliament as a whole at least on all discussions of major importance.

## (2) ENFORCEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY TO THE PUBLIC

Any remaining uncertainty about the degree of trust which it is possible to place in public administration should be dispelled by the Principle of Public Responsibility which public administration accepts as the law of its being. In so far as the public demand that more forms of social action become responsible to it rather than to private hands or to corporate bodies, the range of activities of public administration will increase. Conversely, if the public decide that they do not care whether any given form of social action at present administered publicly is responsible to them for its policy or finance, then it may cease to be part of the public administration of the country. Examples would be decisions to abolish the B.B.C. and to leave the provision of broadcast entertainment and instruction to private enterprise, or to sell Kew Gardens, the British Museum or the National Gallery to a private company or society to be managed as the Zoological Gardens are managed at present.

It is hardly necessary to point out that there is no sign of any such

tendency at present. Both the British Museum and the National Gallery survived the heyday of Victorian liberalism without being threatened in this way and there is little fear that they or the much younger B.B.C. will be transferred to private enterprise now or in the future. If speculation in this field is permissible, we might expect, in the light of the twin principles of Political Direction [No. 1] and Public Responsibility [No. 2], to see more administrative control rather than less and to see such control extend more firmly to some of those public corporations, mentioned at the end of the last chapter, which are now acting, like the B.B.C., as semi-autonomous bodies. This aspect of the control of administrative activities in the public interest will be illustrated in Chapter VIII.

### (3) REALIZATION OF THE NECESSITY FOR PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

The degree to which specific activities such as those represented by the B.B.C. and the British Museum are socially necessary will be the main determining force in the extension of the range of public administration. To the extent that administrative activities are socially necessary, people have to support and even to co-operate with them. The provision of a zoological gardens is not a compelling necessity, consequently it is immaterial whether it is managed by public authority. The British Museum may be thought by many, who perhaps ascend the steps to its portico once for the dozen times they visit the Zoo, to stand in very much the same category. They are supported in such a belief to the extent that the management of the British Museum has not hitherto been very closely integrated with what is usually understood by public administration, that is to say the Whitehall Departments. The museum is governed by its own Trustees and it rarely becomes a subject of political or administrative controversy. Nevertheless, the priceless heritage of imperishable treasures it enshrines constitutes it as an indispensable link in maintaining the cultural continuity, not merely of Great Britain but of Western civilization, and so demand that proper steps be taken by public authority to ensure its maintenance and efficient operation as a matter of true social necessity.

The third principle, like the first two, offers little in the way of detailed prescriptions for specific improvements in public administration. The first three principles are valuable in this respect rather in correcting erroneous views and readjusting the perspective of the problem after it has been thrown badly out of focus by the over-emphasis put upon the difficulties of particular forms of administrative activity, notably the exercise of delegated law-making and adjudicating powers.

The third principle does, however, draw much-needed attention to the necessity of establishing just standards for the measurement and

appraisal of administrative activities. The call for a revaluation of the contribution administrative activity can make to society will clearly not have a very valuable response as long as there is confusion between quantitative money measures used in taxation, for example, with qualitative assessments based upon standards of human well-being which are necessarily often subjective or aesthetic in essence and incapable therefore of valuation in monetary units.

With the remaining principles the practical man of action, in contrast to the speculative political philosopher, will feel himself back on firm ground. It is to be hoped that he will take his stand there with a deepened awareness of the part public administration may be expected to play in the total work of government and in the transformation of present social conditions into better social conditions. Public servants also should be no less impressed by the magnitude, gravity and importance of their task as it is set out for them in the three principles once more reviewed above. The achievement of this comprehensive view of the true role of administration is in itself a vital part of any programme of administrative progress and it may, without paradox, be asserted that the first requisite for the improvement of public administration is a reform outside public administration, namely, that everybody should have an adequate notion of what public administration is, what it can do and how far it is to be related to the other forces by which society is sustained, guided and helped to improve.

#### (4) IMPROVING EFFICIENCY

The principle of efficiency, as it has been seen in the preliminary comment on it and in the analysis of the differences between business and government, has often been regarded as a reforming programme for public administration complete in itself. If the word "efficiency" is given an elastic meaning equivalent to that of "wisdom" there would be something to be said for limiting the discussion of administrative reform to that of administrative efficiency alone. In that case, however, the fourth principle would need to be enlarged to include all the others as well, which is both undesirable and unnecessary.

Nevertheless, it is undoubtedly true that attention will and should be concentrated upon this fourth principle as the first place to look for immediate improvements in administrative operation. The techniques by which such an advance is to be sought cannot be discussed in detail in a general work of this nature. Many of them have been the subject of special treatises already. Unfortunately these works are not as well known as they should be. Many of them are tedious, and junior public servants understandably shun them if they can acquire sufficient information by listening to the advice of their senior colleagues instead of

attempting to plough through turgid works on filing and indexing, office machinery, systems and techniques, much of which appear either as unnecessarily diffuse elaborations of the obvious, unrelated to the special conditions of their own work, as well as destitute of any trace of penetrating insight not to mention any spark of originality to fire an essentially dull and dreary office routine and to light it up in new and stimulating guise.

They are no doubt encouraged in this attitude by the natural reflection that common sense and sticking to the job will see them through, as indeed it does quite successfully ninety-nine times out of a hundred. The principles enumerated as 4.031 to 4.038, for example, are self-explanatory to a very large extent as far as their aims are concerned. What people want to know about them is not whether they are right, because they obviously are, but how to translate them into practice. As a Member of Parliament remarked in the House of Commons [January 28th, 1943, Debates, page 650], "while the civil servant is anxious to be as efficient as possible, he does not always know where to get knowledge of what is efficiency." All the relevant questions about staffing public administration are begged in the principles 4.032 to 4.036. What remains obscure are the answers to them. How are qualities such as initiative, judgment and invention to be evoked from some of the apparently unpromising material sent into the public services from schools and colleges? The task may be impossible and so far little wisdom is available upon the best methods of dealing with it. Perhaps the first thing to emphasize is the duty of every public servant to keep himself fit in the first place and in the second place to look after his own education and mental growth. Human minds are not empty vessels into which charitable and more richly endowed individuals can pour gifts of learning and wisdom. Everyone must seek these desirable qualities for himself. When the need is thus met half-way in advance, it is easier to devise schemes of training and to enrich the experience of individual public servants by arranging their transfer between divisions and branches and from department to department. When the need is not so met the administration is faced with the impossible task of seeking through training schemes to remedy the selection of the wrong type of staff.

#### SELECTION OF STAFF

Nobody interested in the improvement in the quality of administrative performance will be content to leave the standard of assessment of staff merely upon a plane of competence in the performance of allotted departmental tasks. The platonic tradition of desiring philosophers as rulers dies hard and the general demand will never be solely for experts in government offices in such subjects as company law, income-tax law,



educational codes, dietary standards, but always for all-round human beings who happen also to have become experts in those fields.

More knowledge and experience is one thing, but a developed balanced personality implies the possession of other less obvious qualities. The discussion of the occupational diseases of professionalism in general and of the Civil Service in particular, slight and superficial as it was in Chapter V, points to the need to give greater weight to psychological factors in the administrative sphere. If, as it seems plausible to believe, the position in which a civil servant is placed causes him to develop certain fairly clearly marked occupational twists or perversions, the facts should be known and counter-measures should be devised. The problem is one upon which we may be mainly conscious of our ignorance, both about the extent and severity of the disease and about the nature and efficacy of the remedies. Not that there is any lack of practitioners ready to expound what they conceive to be the clue to the mechanism of man or to the hidden mysteries of the human soul. Some of the diagnoses they offer seem more baffling than the maladies they purport to explain. Whether the refinements of so-called psycho-analysis succeed in avoiding the ancient logical fallacy of inventing, as an explanation of the obscure, something many times more obscure is a question which must be left to more qualified judges to pursue.

Of all the prescriptions for increased administrative efficiency, those devoted to improving the calibre of the administrators are clearly far and away the most important. Almost everything turns upon the skill, energy, loyalty, devotion and honesty of the staff. Where these qualities are present in good measure, an administration can hardly fail. Where they are absent, the latest dodges and devices purporting to provide short cuts to efficiency are of no avail. The most up-to-date offices, the latest mechanical equipment in desks, filing cabinets, mechanical calculators and dictating machines are little more than an additional waste of money when the human element is inadequate.

Particularly must this be remembered when ambitious schemes for social transformation are being planned. Everybody wants to see an effective national health service, but as Lord Horder reminded the world in a letter to *The Times* of February 21st, 1945, "it takes six years to produce a doctor and another ten to produce a specialist. We must face the situation realistically. To pretend that a comprehensive medical service can come into operation on a date fixed for financial and maybe political reasons would be to delude the public and ultimately to discredit the new service." What is true of the directing brains is true all along the line. Of the new social security plans it was well said that "in the long transmission belt carrying social policy from Whitehall to the private citizen, it is the interviewing officer who makes final

delivery; if he is pre-emptory, hurried, irritable or stupid he will alienate citizens, and bungle the execution of policy however well thought out that policy may be. ["Social Security," ed. W. A. Robson, 1948. Miss J. S. Clarke on The Staff Problem, page 373.]

It should be possible by more careful methods of selection to avoid recruiting obvious misfits. Developments in the practice of vocational guidance have already many successes to their credit, although they seem so far to be scored mainly on the level of manipulative and repetitive work. The case for continued experiment in the application of such principles is unanswerable. Any well thought out and carefully matured system of selection should be better than the hit-or-miss methods which have hitherto ruled supreme. The competitive examination was the first attempt to devise a more objective test of suitability for employment than family connection or personal appearance had formerly provided. As more is learned about personality and character it would be foolish not to use such knowledge to help out the impressions formed by anonymous examiners while reading anonymous examination answers. In time men and women may be prepared to trust themselves without reserve to sieves manipulated by the psychologists in their white overalls and cheerfully become bank clerks, dustmen or assistant Under-Secretaries of State upon the result of their performances in intelligence tests, combined with the record of their ability assessed during time and motion studies. The conservatism of mankind will no doubt delay the adoption of such devices until it is clear beyond a shadow of a doubt that grave injustices are not perpetrated at the expense of the infinite variety and unlimited potentiality of the human spirit. Mankind as a whole are fortunately far from convinced that their destiny should be so limited and predetermined in advance, and any revision in the system of recruitment for the public service, or in the subsequent treatment of recruits accepted for it, will ignore this salutary fact at very considerable peril.

### STAFF TRAINING

Training newly appointed officials may not be able to make efficient public servants out of fundamentally unintelligent and stupid personnel, but it can do a great deal for more gifted people. Since the examination system is devised not merely to prevent the recruitment of unfit people but to pick the cream of the large number of candidates, the utility of a training scheme in the Civil Service may be expected to be high. Training schemes, if they are well devised, should in fact yield results in the Civil Service higher than might be expected in businesses and industries less exacting in their standards of admission [4.034].

Perhaps the success with which civil servants have learned their work without formal training is the explanation of the undoubted fact that there

have been conspicuously few training schemes in operation up to 1945. This apparent weakness in Civil Service machinery was singled out for attention by the Select Committee on National Expenditure, whose main recommendation (in their 56th Report [HC 120/1942]) by way of remedy was the creation of a Civil Service staff college. Again on the analogy of the Army, the formation of a staff college had been advocated for some years previously but it has not won complete acceptance. The civil servants to be sent to it after a few years' actual service were described by the Committee "as picked members of the administrative and professional grades, as well as promising members of the executive and clerical grades." Once there, they should follow "courses in public administration and in modern developments in trade and industry, economics, social services, etc." Beyond formal academic study, it was also recommended that they should be brought "into visual contact with commerce and industry and with the work of local authorities, public utility companies, social services, etc., and in particular with those levels of government activity at which departments come into direct touch with the life of the community, *e.g.*, inland revenue and public assistance." The importance of this latter recommendation will be more completely evident in the light of the comment upon Principle Six.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer put both the general problem of training and the proposal for a staff college to a committee in 1943, whose Report on the Training of Civil Servants [Cmd. 6525], published in 1944, will no doubt serve as a basis for future arrangements to improve the calibre of civil servants. The committee's recommendations, although not going as far as some enthusiasts had hoped, nevertheless went further than most departmental practices. Every department, they thought, should have a planned training scheme which should be managed by a very carefully chosen full-time training officer, except in the smaller departments where a part-time officer might suffice. All new entrants should undergo a routine of training and they should all be provided with "a document setting out the traditions and aims of the Service" and "a booklet giving the history and functions of the department and a guide to office procedure." This formal training, it was recommended, should be backed up by the regular issue of an office bulletin, giving the staff as much information as possible about the work of their department, a house journal as well, and a good library. Films should also be used.

At the same time "departments should encourage their staff to acquire outside vocational qualifications by provision, in approved cases, of time off and payment of fees."

These general and official provisions were accompanied by a recommendation that non-vocational further education should also be encouraged but not by the State paying fees. That is to say, authority should

bestow its blessing upon civil servants keen to use their leisure upon philosophy, Sanskrit or the higher criticism, but should give no money to help them.

Departmentally, these arrangements were for establishment officers to control. They "should be regarded as key men, and should study staff management and office organization. They should be in touch with staff practice in business organizations." Centrally, a director of training and education should be appointed by the Treasury to exercise general control over training.

The Committee considered carefully the proposal for a Civil Service staff college but pronounced against it. They thought that a staff college would cater for persons "selected as suitable for promotion after some years of experience," whereas the training schemes they wanted were primarily for new entrants. Not that they did not favour a break in a man's career in the early 'thirties, but they recommended that it should take the form of "sabbatical leave in various forms for the purposes of study or foreign travel for those destined to fill posts of high responsibility."

Their second objection to the recommendation of a staff college is less easy to understand in the light of the principles of public administration formulated above. It was that "it is extremely difficult to find a firm foundation on which could be based a method of teaching administration common to both business and the Civil Service." The Committee feared that the attempt would end in the proposed institution "becoming a commercial college concerned with office methods, and that a real opportunity of assisting the Civil Service administrator to a rapid comprehension of the nature of his problems and the lines of thought and action he should follow would be lost if such training was merged in a generalized administrative course for both business and the Services."

The Committee did not amplify their opinion, neither did they indicate what common ground exists between business and administration. In the absence of any comprehensive statement of the principles of public administration which has for the first time been attempted in the eight principles set out above, it has not been easy to state the similarities and dissimilarities between business and public administration. The discussion of the principles above and also the review provided in the previous chapter may not exhaust the subject, but they should be sufficient to show that the Committee's recommendation against a staff college cannot be substantiated on the grounds that office methods are alone principally in question in business.

The Committee's own statement of the aims of training in the Civil Service supports this conclusion against them. They listed five "main aims" which may be summarized in the Committee's own words as:—

1. "Precision and clarity in the transaction of business.
2. "Ability to 'boldly adjust its outlook and methods to the new needs of new times.'
3. "The recruit 'should be made aware of the relation of his work to the Service rendered by his department to the community.'
4. "To develop 'capacity for higher work and greater responsibility.'
5. "Because much of the civil servants' working life will be spent on tasks of routine character, training plans 'must pay substantial regard to staff morale.'"

Few business men would disavow a similar programme of training for their own staff. None but the hardened cynic would omit the third aim from such a programme were it applied to business. It is true that the public servant would pursue these objectives in a Civil Service context rather than in relation to business, but both civil servant and business man would be none the worse for sharing to some extent in the process as it is applied in both fields.

The advocacy of a break for foreign travel is undoubtedly more attractive, and it would probably prove more stimulating and more lastingly rewarding to civil servants in their 'thirties than a return to domestic academic life. For one thing, the energetic administrator, unless he is overburdened with work, may be expected to have educated himself considerably in the leisure hours of his official life. The literature of economics, political theory, sociology and even of public administration is becoming steadily more rewarding. The generation trained in these fields in the 'twenties of the present century was poverty stricken in its resources of books and periodicals compared with the students of the 1940s. Any administrator worth his salt should acquire and ponder as much of the literature of these subjects as he can and the habit is one he will no doubt not neglect as he advances in the Service. Without conceit, he may think that the degree of additional wisdom and learning he may acquire from a staff college would not be noticeably or very valuably in excess of what he can pick up for himself. But with foreign travel and study the whole aspect changes. He then encounters sharp differences in administrative practice. The contrast stimulates him to look beyond practice to principle and so to awaken him from the dogmatic slumber which a single environment can hardly fail to induce. This is not the place to attempt to assess all the other values likely to flow from the adoption of the Committee's recommendation. Many lie on the surface and it is hardly likely that the proposal will fail because they are not recognized. It will be the novelty, the costs and doubts about the method by which it should be operated which will probably delay acceptance of it.

Much more also could be said upon the training problem in general but this brief review, with the references to the Report of the Committee on the Training of Civil Servants, may suffice to indicate the possibilities of Civil Service reform latent in the implementation of the Report and in further attention to the Principle 4.033.

OFFICE METHODS AND MACHINERY.—The revision of office methods [4.035, 4.036, 4.037] continually goes on, and it is an obvious field for continued trial of new labour-saving devices. The pace of change in this respect is altogether more rapid than the pre-1914 generation of civil servants were prepared to accept. Telephones were first installed after 1880 on a very modest scale. Sir Charles Walker records in his reminiscences of "Thirty-six Years at the Admiralty" [1933], that "telephones were not generally installed until a few years before the war" (1914-1918). They were reluctantly used and it was still possible in 1918 to encounter elderly civil servants who regarded them as an unmitigated nuisance, some even going to the length of refusing to have them in their rooms. Typewriters first made their appearance in the Treasury in 1889, but shorthand writers were not introduced there until 1892. The Treasury had already long enjoyed its position as the most important Government Office, so if its lead in accepting new inventions and changed practices was no more resolute than this, other departments could not be expected to try to force the pace. It will be difficult for younger generations to realize that there are millions of men and women alive to-day who were beginning to earn their living at a time when civil servants wrote all their minutes, files and draft letters in their own hand, when men were employed as copying clerks to produce fair copies from the drafts and when the only artificial light available in an office such as the Treasury was that afforded by candles.

ORGANIZATION AND METHODS.—Nowadays the search for increased efficiency in the public service has itself become a specialism. The development has been somewhat belated. In 1919 the Treasury added to its staff one or two specialists in office machinery in the expectation, no doubt, that their work would grow. The expectation, if it existed, was long in being realized. The Treasury investigating officers, as they were called, dwindled instead of increasing and in 1939 there were only two of them. Commenting upon this fact in 1942, the Select Committee on National Expenditure, sweepingly and not very accurately, observed that "the period from 1919 to 1939 was marked by an almost complete failure to foster the systematic study of organization as applied to Government Departments." A remedy for this state of affairs was sought during the war of 1939-1945 and the two Treasury investigating officers became the Organization and Methods Division of the Treasury with a

staff at the beginning of June, 1942, of 46. The movement was encouraged to spread to other departments, and several of the larger departments created Organization and Methods (or O. and M.) Sections of their own to introduce for themselves, or to co-operate with the Treasury in introducing improved systems of work. In 1942 the Select Committee were not satisfied with the rate of progress achieved, complaining that the "O. and M." work then being carried out was "mainly sectional in character and largely restricted to the lower levels. It is, in short, concerned with some of the twigs rather than the branches and trunk of the departmental trees."

The expansion and increased powers which the Select Committee wished to see given to Organization and Methods Divisions throughout the public service aimed at strengthening the internal controls over public administration to which attention was drawn in Chapter VII. The Committee's recommendations, therefore, illustrate a way administration can be improved according to Principle 4.038. Much was hoped for as a result of such a policy of increased control, particularly if it were subject to some central co-ordination and direction. "The day is long past," said the Select Committee, "when each department may be left to follow its own path of trial and error." The central source of control should be the Treasury, and the Committee thought that the organization of the Treasury ought to be revised to provide regular machinery carrying greater weight and prestige to replace the war-time Organization and Methods Division which the Committee found unduly lacking in power and influence. They hoped to see it put in charge of a specially appointed second secretary or deputy secretary and given as much attention as existing Treasury Organization gives to the main questions of finance and supply.

The question was discussed in Parliament on January 28th, 1943, in a debate which will continue to be read by students of public administration for some time to come. The somewhat sweeping recommendations of the Select Committee on National Expenditure of 1943 were not adopted. The Chancellor of the Exchequer stated the Government's views upon the proposals and the Government attitude as thus defined was presented later to the Select Committee on National Expenditure in a Treasury Memorandum. The Government did not accept the Select Committee's recommendation that departmental Organization and Methods Divisions should be enjoined upon all large departments and that they should take over establishment duties as part of O. and M. functions. The Government statement maintained the establishment officer pre-eminent and responsible for both personnel and organization questions. It agreed to incorporate the Treasury Organization and Methods Division as part of the permanent staff of the Treasury, but not to create a joint second secretary exclusively concerned with

machinery of government questions. Periodical overhauls of the machinery of government were accepted as desirable by the Government subject to the overriding consideration that fundamental changes in the machinery of government must remain matters for Ministerial decision.

The Select Committee seems to have overstated its case. Its report did not do justice to the very considerable developments in departmental reorganization and internal reform which characterized the period 1919-1939. Minor departments such as the Stationery Office, huge old departments such as the Post Office, which were still nineteenth-century offices in 1914, underwent complete overhaul and reorganization after the war. Large new departments, such as the Ministry of Labour, also kept pace with the times. Their reforming zeal was true to the spirit of "O. and M." although that mystic formula had not yet been invented.

What these departments have achieved by their own energies, other departments can, if necessary, likewise achieve. The establishment officers, who were created after the war of 1914-1919, were in fact "O. and M." officers in many departments, although the degree to which they were given a free hand and allowed to make their weight felt no doubt varied from one department to another. In electing to build up the position of establishment officers instead of creating new "O. and M." officers to which they would be subordinate, the Chancellor of the Exchequer followed the rule of preferring organic development rather than revolutionary change. The situation (as the war-time achievement of the Civil Service proves) was not so bad that revolutionary innovations were necessary.

By strengthening the staff function of "O. and M." or "Establishment," the function of advising on *how* work is to be done will be given more weight and influence. In time this "staff" function will no doubt seem almost as important as the "line" function responsible for policy, or *what* is to be done. It may then be recognized by elevating the status of the chief "O. and M." officer not merely in the Treasury as the Select Committee advised, but in every department.

As so often in human experience, a new name is devised, perhaps by the younger generation, that seems somehow to inspire human energies afresh despite the fact that they must continue to be exercised in the old routines. In the years before 1914 "efficiency" was the magic word. It still retains something of its early glamour. In the 1920s "rationalization" was popularized, to be followed in the 1930s by "technocracy" and more recently by "management." Is it not the fact that these temporary slogans are merely manifestations of the determination of mankind to vindicate the grand principle of increasing rationality in as many departments of life as possible, as the statement of the fourth



principle of Public Administration in Chapter II implies? In that case there is nothing new in "O. and M." The content of the new symbol is exhausted by fulfilment of the principle of increasing rationality (4) and the principle of organization (5). What is new is that both receive fresh recognition and, what is all important, executive staff to pursue them (5.01).

To expect new miracles from "O. and M." would foster the delusion that somewhere in high heaven or on earth below is to be found a novel force or a new principle able to change human activity in a way hitherto impossible. It will not be the least service that a comprehensive statement of the principles of public administration can render, if it diverts attention from the search for novelties and pseudo-remedies to the more practical and rewarding duty of dealing with the hard reality of the administrative task lying before us.

Faith in blessed words or new symbols will take men a very little way along this stony road. A new philosophy of life or a fresh religious impulse might no doubt change the attitude of man to his fellow men in ways which would exercise as profound an influence upon society as the introduction of Christianity exerted upon the Roman Empire. Public administration, however, must meanwhile face life as it finds it and frame its principles and policies accordingly.

STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.—Vivid awareness of ministerial independence may also have led the Government to reject a proposal of the Select Committee on National Expenditure that Parliament should appoint a new Select Committee every Session to be charged with the duty of conducting on behalf of the House a continuing review of the machinery of government. It had been proposed that just as the Public Accounts Committee is served by the Comptroller and Auditor General (see Chapter VII) so the new Machinery of Government Committee should be aided by a new official of the House with the title of Assessor. The duties proposed for the Assessor were to acquaint himself sufficiently with current developments in public administration and to bring to the notice of the Machinery of Government Committee possible fields of enquiry.

This interesting proposal must be included among the questions for Parliament rather than for public administration which were referred to at the end of the first section of this chapter. The idea of appointing every Session a Select Committee on the Machinery of Government, a Select Committee on the B.B.C., a Select Committee on Foreign Affairs, on the Colonies, or on any other subject of strong current interest or controversy, may possess an immediate appeal to busy people conscious that all these subjects are as it were danger spots or zones of likely trouble

and anxiety, and aware that they are expected to make some helpful recommendation for their improvement. The Select Committee on Public Accounts has done very useful service aided by a unique official, the Comptroller and Auditor General, so why should not Select Committees on all the other subjects prove equally successful? This question, plausible though it may seem, assumes that the analogy between accounting work and other duties in the public service is a good analogy. So it may be over such routine matters as registry work and establishment work but these are capable of administrative regulation without bothering Parliament. Are there general techniques other than those of financial management amounting to more than administrative routine work common to all government departments to which Parliament might profitably devote its time? Delegated legislation and quasi-judicial functions are one. Public Relations [Principle 6] are perhaps another. Contract and purchasing, where they are not covered by the machinery for financial review, can be safely left to administration. Beyond these fields, whenever departmental activities are in review, the multitude and complexity of the problems arising are probably such that a Select Committee could not cope with them unless it went as far into details as the department itself has to go. No Parliamentary Committee has time to do that, nor is there any reason why it should. Just as in the discussion of internal controls in Chapter V it was pointed out that Treasury oversight did not mean that there was in the Treasury an organization paralleling or mirroring the entire work of all the other departments, so it is impracticable to try to create such parallels from the busy ranks of the House of Commons. It would be a serious mistake to propose that Parliament and Administration should try to run in double harness over the whole vast track of public administration since to do so obviously runs counter to the principle of the division of labour in society so often stressed above.

Operating efficiency is not to be obtained merely by multiplying supervisors. More than one speaker in the debate on the Civil Service in the House of Commons on January 28th, 1948, made this clear. One said: "Anyone who has worked in an office, under the constant pressure of everyday affairs, knows how difficult it is to have the experts always at your elbow, seeing whether you are doing things the right way or whether you could do them a little quicker." Another more picturesquely quoted the verse:—

" Great fleas have little fleas upon their backs to bite 'em  
And little fleas have lesser fleas, and so *ad infinitum* " ;

adding that recommendations for additional controls of the Civil Service seemed to be devised on the basis "set up a body, then set up somebody

else to bite them, and so it goes on. An attack by fleas does not always have a desirable result."

Here, it may be pointed out, is the difference in a nutshell between a police state, where a Gestapo man is always checking-up on other people's activities, and a free democratic society in which every member of it is trusted to do an honest day's work and so to maintain the total output under a system of the division of labour arrived at on a voluntary basis.

Specific objections on grounds of organization already noticed in Chapter V and in Section 1 of this chapter are that control by Parliamentary Committees, even if confined to an advisory role, strikes at the doctrine of Ministerial and Cabinet responsibility [2.03]; it also runs the danger of involving the legislature in administrative tasks [1.03-1.05]; fogs the line of administrative responsibility [5.02] and may involve the administration too directly in political matters [1.09].

It would be too much to assert that any standing Parliamentary Committee to deal with particular administrative tasks would inevitably fail for these reasons. Such a Committee would be as good as its members make it, and, with traditional British political sense, they would no doubt devise ways and means of doing their job without precipitating a series of administrative or constitutional crises. Given a fund of goodwill and determination almost any form of administration can be made to work. But time is short and resources in manpower are scarce. It is therefore stupid to adopt procedures contrary to the best known administrative principles when they are almost certain to put an undue strain upon the machinery of government. Such at least is the message of this fourth principle of efficiency which enjoins operating by the least means. Perhaps the assurance with which this conclusion may now be drawn is relative to the state of public administration in a country of liberal traditions, characterized mainly by free competitive enterprise. If the range of public administration were to extend over ever-widening fields, then the desire for some weightier counterpoise to executive power might stimulate people to ask, as Mr. C. K. Allen, amongst others, is already asking, for the balance of power in the State to be redressed by giving greater prominence to the reality of legislative supremacy. This, again, is a political rather than an administrative consideration, but it arises out of administration. It will appear in clearer light after a review of the principle of Organization and of Public Relations which follow.

#### (5) IMPROVING PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION THROUGH ORGANIZATION

It will already be evident from the fifth principle of public administration and the comment upon it that the administrative task of organization goes to the heart of what is a most difficult yet vital problem of public administration. Where others have written and spoken as

though "efficiency" was the one thing needful, a distinguished American writer, Brooks Adams, with more penetrating insight, once referred to what is essentially a description of organization as the beginning and end of the subject. "Administration," he said, "is the capacity of co-ordinating many, and often conflicting, energies into a single organism so adroitly that they shall operate as a unity. This presupposes a power of recognizing a series of relations between numerous special social interests with all of which no man can be intimately acquainted. Probably no very specialized class can be strong in this intellectual quality because of the intellectual isolation incident to specialization; yet administration or generalization is not the only faculty upon which social stability rests, but it is possibly the highest faculty of the human mind"—which explains perhaps what Plato meant when he said that philosophers should be kings. When the matter is put in this way, it immediately throws a new light upon the central importance of the fifth principle. It also illuminates the principles to be followed in recruiting and training staff. "The power of recognizing a series of relations between numerous special social interests," rightly stressed as a quality without which nobody can become a competent administrator, can surely be cultivated by appropriate study and courses of training?

Life in general is a perpetual process of acquiring and co-ordinating new pieces of information and the young civil servant who succeeds best at it will become a better organizer as a result.

It will be unnecessary to labour the point which was emphasized in the comment on the fifth principle. What is more to the purpose here is to see how a consciousness of the truths embodied in that principle can be used to stimulate improvements in public administration.

**ORGANIZATION AS AN ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTION.**—In the first place it will be evident from the title itself that "Organization and Methods" work puts organization at the forefront of planned activity to improve public administration. The continuing review of departmental organization to which "O. and M." Divisions will devote much of their time will constantly lead to organizational changes within departments and consequently to greater operating efficiency. In time it will probably build up a body of knowledge on organizational problems of permanent value.

**THE NEED FOR RESEARCH IN PROBLEMS OF ORGANIZATION.**—Secondly, there can be little doubt that we stand in need of greater knowledge in this sphere. The analysis by "staff and line" [5.02 and 5.08] represents one of the few guiding principles we possess in this field and it has been seen in the comment on principle five that not all students of the subject rate it as of the highest importance. Other principles of organ-

ization such as the hierarchical or "scalar" division of functions and "vertical and horizontal correlation" [5.02 and 5.04] do little more than state aspects of the "staff and line" analysis in other words, and do not succeed in conveying the matter so completely.

**PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION LIMITED BY THE DIFFICULTIES OF ORGANIZATION.**—In the third place our need for greater knowledge about the best way to use organization in society suggests that caution will be needed in extending the range of activities dependent upon it. It is a caution which derives strong support from the great difficulty of finding men and women sufficiently well endowed with what "is possibly the highest faculty of the human mind."

The inherent difficulty of the task to which the above quotation draws attention is stated among the principles [5.04].

Is not this difficulty the one sensed by critics of expanding administration when they write, as Dr. C. K. Allen has done [Laws and Orders, 1945], "the evils of bureaucracy, and, in particular, its tendency to arbitrariness, do not spring from the sinister designs or the perverted views of individuals. They spring from the inherent and insidious characteristics of the system. And for the system, it is not the civil servant and it is not even Parliament who is responsible. It is the nation." It is the nation, that is to say, which asks for new tasks to be undertaken on its behalf without realizing that it is demanding ever greater organization of social action. Together with other considerations, such as the memory of tyrannical abuse of State power, awareness of the great difficulty of achieving good organization has probably made men hesitate instinctively, if not consciously, to enlarge the competence of executive authority in the State. "Why not let it alone," which was the first question an elder statesman of the Victorian era used to ask, then seems wisdom. It is not the only aspect of organization which gives rise to hesitation and uncertainty.

At the end of the comparison between public administration and business, attention was drawn to the efforts made to secure a greater sense of public responsibility in business by adopting the device of the public corporation, and it was suggested that among the attractions of that new form of administrative control of a monopoly business organization was the opportunity it appeared to provide of somewhat reducing the necessity for a thorough-going central control in all public affairs.

**ORGANIZATION AS A TECHNIQUE OF TOTALITARIANISM.**—The desirability of arranging for such a decentralization of authority arises particularly from an outstanding feature of the principle of organization, namely, the necessity for a clear line of responsibility and authority [5.02]. If this is indeed essential in administration, then, as administration extends,

the weight of responsibility falling upon a few men or a single man and the area of subordination for all other men becomes vaster. Correspondingly, as the liberty of the ordinary man is circumscribed, the authority of the man at the top of the line of authority is continually being enlarged. The result can surely be nothing less than the creation of a totalitarian State.

Before the spectacle of such a development is allowed to raise the scare that, by expanding their public administration, men are all set on the high road to totalitarianism, it is necessary to recall at once the facts set out in the first, second and third principles of public administration and the emphasis placed in the comments upon them upon the supremacy of Parliament and the Rule of Law to which the British Constitution has been and remains dedicated.

Practically, the danger of totalitarianism in Great Britain is remote. National character and traditions count sufficiently in the development of any country to make it impossible to prejudge an issue like the development of totalitarianism on merely theoretical grounds such as the speculative extension of the process of organization.

However, if the argument is to be followed where it leads, a reference to the theoretical implications of the principle of organization will not be out of place. With the fate of Germany fresh in everybody's memory, it is abundantly evident that this particular theoretical aspect of organization can easily become the practice also. For no Western country has been more devoted to the doctrine of organization than Germany and no people have referred with greater pride to their success in its application than have the Germans. They have applied it extensively not merely in industry and business, but in the field of knowledge and learning and in social processes generally. They have almost organized themselves out of existence as a result. It is no use repeating the truism that not organization but the uses to which organization are put is the moral of German history. A method which lends itself to such catastrophic, even cataclysmic results will, it may be hoped, never commend itself again to humanity unless it is surrounded by very evident and abundant safeguards. Yet in so far as current tendencies in economics and politics are constantly increasing the demand for the planning and control of hitherto unplanned and uncontrolled social forces, there is a very real sense in which "the German problem" is the general problem although not in the way which Hitler and his gang tried to make out. How can there be organization without a chain of command depending ultimately upon one commander?

THE PLACE OF ORGANIZATION IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY.—The uncertainties and dangers being evident, there is little fear that extension of administrative organization will be indiscriminate. The history of its

recent extension, and still more the history of attempts to extend it which have failed in England, show how alert public and legislative opinion are to the risks involved. The party of progress will indeed chafe at what it regards as the excessive caution and timidity exhibited towards plans for further extension of social control. The party of conservation or stability will view with alarm measures for decreasing still further the area remaining to unrestricted private enterprise. Hymns to the beauty of social order and the brotherhood of man do not always chime harmoniously with poems to the creative energies of the free human spirit.

If it is to be the task of public administration to contribute to eliminating the discords or, in the language of dialectic, to discover a higher synthesis to the thesis, liberty, and the antithesis, order, it will be through development and refinements in the technique of organization that it must be sought.

The principle of organization itself points to an internal line of progress through elaboration of the "staff" principle. A good staff will save the line authority from disaster unless "the line" is cursed by maniacal, suicidal tendencies of the Hitlerian type. Consequently, individual power, like individual responsibility, will usually be a composite affair, even at the top of the administrative pyramid. Autocrats who "bear like the Turk no brother near the throne," will be the exception rather than the rule in British practice and there is sufficient general rejoicing when such mighty ones are pulled down from their seats to make it unlikely that any one of them would long retain power for harm.

A permanent secretary of a Government Department at loggerheads with his finance officer and establishment officer will not easily vindicate his supreme "line" authority unless right, justice and wisdom can be seen to be on his side.

**THE ORGANIZATION OF LIFE AND HUMAN FREEDOMS.**—In the last analysis it has often been said power cannot be restrained except by power; hence the efforts made to balance power in synthetic as opposed to organic constitutions. Within the administrative structure alone there are now nearly always alternative sources of power. A public department suffering from a pocket Hitler or Mussolini is likely to be rescued either by the Treasury, or, if higher authority is required, by Ministerial intervention. The hypothetical case of extreme peril in the British Constitution might be the advent of a Hitler as the First Lord of the Treasury, with a Goering as Permanent Secretary of the Treasury. Appalling as the prospect rightly appears, it may be doubted whether it would sound the death-knell of British liberties.

Many other strange new developments would also have to occur in Parliament, the Law Courts, the Civil Service, among the political parties

and their supporters, not to mention the Privy Council and Buckingham Palace, before the great mass of the British electorate would begin to lose any sleep about their perilous position.

They might begin to suffer from a real nightmare if everything in their lives were controlled by public authority. Their fears might be expressed on the following lines. There is clearly a limit to the extent to which mere administrative adjustments can mask the reality of human subordination if all the major forms of social action become publicly administered functions of the State. Public administration would itself suffer changes if there were no areas of free enterprise outside it. The civil servant himself would be sensibly a less free and independent person if he knew that to offend the hierarchy to which he was subordinated meant offending the only authority from whom he could expect employment. The joys of success under such conditions would probably lose much of their sweetness. Few who read Mr. Charles Gide's attractive little introductory volume, *Principes d'Economie Politique*, will forget the footnote [1921 Ed. p.618] quoting what were said to be the opinions of the workers in an industrial city maintained by the Pullman company: "We are born in a Pullman house, fed from Pullman shops, taught in Pullman schools, catechized in a Pullman church, and when we die we will be buried in a Pullman cemetery and go to the Pullman hell." It is not necessary to doubt that the house, the food, the schools, the church and the cemetery were as good as the Pullman Company knew how to make them in order to sympathize with the sense of incompleteness in a life cast so largely upon predetermined patterns. The obvious dangers such a way of life involves have always appalled energetic and self-reliant men who share the views expressed by the first Lord Lloyd. "If we substitute for the free citizens of the Christian Commonwealth the inmates of the institutional state, we remove the risks and the responsibilities, but we shall lose in future generations the character and intelligence necessary to progress. We shall end, like all other slave states, by having in desperation to free the slaves."

The creative urge of the human spirit is a phrase already used in this volume and, to some, it may seem to have begged some large questions. It is, however, in a context such as that which the Pullman quotation described that the reality behind it can be sensed. It is not enough that the planners, architects and designers of the houses, schools, churches and cemeteries may have rejoiced in their work. Neither would questioning be stilled if a large proportion of the Pullman employees asked no more of life than to create Pullman coaches and to await their ultimate destination in the conditions described. We would expect them, like the young shepherd in "La Belle Hélène," to ask for something more. In the language of sociological speculation, there are "psychic energies



needing sublimation" after "wills have been integrated" by organization [see *Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction*, by Karl Mannheim, p. 83, for the development of these ideas].

Considerations of this type belong to the limits of public administration rather than to the reality of it as it is known to-day, yet unless the possibilities for human well-being which administration and organization hold are pushed to such theoretical limits it will not be easy to gain an adequate notion of the contribution they can make to the quality as well as to the quantitative or material aspects of human life.

Realization of the probable resentment amounting to an absolute intolerance which will be exhibited by men and women who may, in accordance with some predetermined scheme, find their lives planned for them has no doubt made some of the more ambitious planners talk about "planning for leisure" and "planning for freedom." While the discussion remains on this plane of some men obeying the commands and accepting the decisions which other men make for them, a host of difficulties remain for solution. How far it is possible for some men to plan for the freedom of other men? Does it mean that a few all-powerful planners will graciously determine to mask off areas in which they are content, for the moment, to refrain from interference? What administrative mechanism would they use? Put in this way, the question will at once arise whether it is not desirable to leave unplanned as large as possible an area of life, as our Victorian ancestors believed. Before dismissing such weighty problems with the easy solution that they involve considerations which do not properly belong to a work on public administration but must be followed up in general sociological studies, it will be worth while examining briefly the possibility that much of the difficulties they occasion may be due to a faulty statement of the nature of control through organization.

**THE CONTRIBUTION OF ORGANIZATION TO THE ENLARGEMENT OF LIFE AND GREATER FREEDOM.**—The contention of this section is that the fears expressed above that organization is merely another name for activities cramping human development derive from faulty organization rather than from the principle of organization itself.

It is abundantly evident, for example, that such freedom as mankind has won in the struggle against dirt, poverty, disease, brutality and the undisguised rule of force has been the result of organization to combat these evils, not despite organization. Such human freedom as men and women enjoyed during periods which, it must be supposed, are to be regarded in retrospect as golden ages of human liberty—Rome under the Flavian Emperors, England during the later Victorian and the Edwardian era—were not periods in which society was not organized

for a great number of purposes. Such organization bred freedom and liberty for those whom it benefited. Can it be true that a principle which has already yielded such immeasurable advantages to the cause of civilization should itself carry the seeds of death of civilization? Is it not rather true that organization would itself be diseased if such a result occurred? In other words, it cannot be organization as such but it must be bad organization which leads to human bondage.

The clue to the distinction lies in the principle of unified command [5.02] and in the meaning to be given to the word "command." The principle states that a clear line of *responsibility* must extend throughout public administration, not merely that a clear line of *authority* must so extend. Responsibility and authority may always go together in the sense that responsibility should always carry authority. In the British pattern of public administration authority derives from responsibility as it always should. That responsibility is and has been a responsibility towards Parliament and the Rule of Law [Principles 1 and 2].

In the Prussian pattern authority comes first and responsibility second, if at all. In the Nazi State the notion of responsibility to the Rule of Law seemed to fade away entirely. In fact it was abolished in so many words when Hitler declared himself the source of all law in the Third Reich at the time of the Roehm purge. It is evident that he never afterwards resigned his position in favour of the Rule of Law. Law thereafter for Germans was not something that "the officials" obeyed with all other citizens. Instead, Law meant what the officials commanded. Law in the real sense of the word, as its meaning has endured during two thousand years and more in the liberal humanistic tradition of Western European civilization, was abolished in Germany. With it liberty inevitably died too. Is not this an explanation how Germany took the "Road to Serfdom" and a reason for believing that it is not necessarily the same road as the "Road to Organization"? The question is of such vital importance to our age that some examination of it is justified at the risk of some repetition.

**POLITICAL SOVEREIGNTY AND ORGANIZATION.**—It is not difficult to connect the doctrine of "the line" [5.02] with the theories of sovereignty developed by political theory. "Sovereignty is indivisible," it is said, and all power can be traced backwards, ultimately to a single source. The analytical truth of this notion cannot be applied without qualification and reserve to administrative practice. In accordance with it there must be unified command in all effective organizations. In other words, it can be held that "line" authority must be unbroken and clear. This is true, but it is not the aspect of organization of which administrators in a country subject to the Rule of Law are most conscious. British civil servants can spend a useful and active career in their departments

without having their days punctuated by a series of sharp commands from their immediate superiors. They are not apt to look upon their daily work as being subject to constant interruptions every time new pronouncements from sovereign authority above are passed on to them for unquestioning obedience. Work either goes on according to a settled plan providing for the execution of an already agreed policy, or, if new problems are constantly arising, new policies have to be sought. In many cases the officer who encounters the problem will himself find the solution. He will rarely say "here is a new problem which I submit for instructions." If he considers that his chiefs ought to be told about it, and it is usually left to him to decide whether they should be, he brings it to their notice, together with his own proposals for dealing with it. Now, as Sir Henry Taylor pointed out (see page 6): "He who has the statement of a question after this manner (*i.e.*, making an estimate of the relevancy and significance of the respective facts of a case) will generally speaking have the decision of it." The civil servant's chiefs may not agree with him and the question may be referred up "the line" to the Permanent Secretary or to the Minister for final decision. Then the "sovereignty" of the head of "the line" is vindicated. But these occasions are relatively few in comparison with the vast body of business which must be done each day. A moment's thought will show that a theory of unified command or sovereignty of "the line" which involved the sovereign authority in every problem would break down in practice at once. That breakdown can be avoided only by efficient organization. Organization, therefore, as Miss Follett has so ably demonstrated, is not a device to bring sovereignty into operation so much as a method of providing for a proper integration of activities within an administrative body. The activities themselves are not conveniently spaced out on a line of ascending or descending sovereignty but are rather focal points for the integration of the particular tasks done at those various levels with the purposes of the organization as a whole. It is better, because more realistic, to say that every job involves its own responsibility and therefore carries its own authority, than to say that a particular amount of authority is conferred upon the men who are put in those jobs. It is also no derogation of the "power to decide" possessed by the man who is responsible for giving decisions, if the emphasis is put upon his place in the organization rather than in himself as higher clerical, executive, staff officer or principal. It was Miss Follett who drew attention to the fact that responsibility, not authority, is the character to look for in public administration. Authority, she held, comes afterwards and flows from responsibility. The task of discharging a duty to the public carries its own authority with it. A reference to the principle of the division of labour as the sustaining force of modern society will confirm Miss

Follett's insight and help to show why such a view as hers must be true. Unless everyone takes an independent, different share of the divided labour, the principle does not operate. As soon as that share is taken, the worker taking it incurs the responsibility for doing it and at the same time he must have the means of performing it. The authority he may need goes with the job. It is not given to him, because he has been selected as specially worthy to be endowed with some mystic power; provided, as it were, with his own little pocket flask containing his own allotted ration of a magic fluid labelled "political sovereignty." There may well be occasions when a filing clerk or a despatch clerk will be in a position to tell the head of an office how his particular duty must be done, whatever the chief may think, and if the clerk correctly interprets the situation his chief will defer to him. Where is sovereignty then? The compelling factor, as it will be argued later, is not the chief's possession of "more sovereignty" than the clerk has. The compelling force arises from the nature of the circumstances in which all duties have to be undertaken. Organization is devised to adjust administration to meet the circumstances, not to provide segments of sovereignty to command all spheres of life.

It may be objected that though Miss Follett's doctrine may be true in the business world, it does not apply in public administration because political sovereignty is the power behind administrative action. The first three principles of public administration specifically make it clear that administration is part of government. The answer seems to be, as indicated above, that analytically true though it is to regard public administration as the exercise of political sovereignty, the actual operation of public administration will be more effective and better understood if its authority is derived from the nature of the task administration has to accomplish. Everybody wants to see the Royal Navy or the Royal Air Force and the Army maintained as an efficient defence of the country. Everybody wants the children of Britain to get the best education in the most pleasant surroundings that can be provided. Nobody wants to see the old, sick and infirm dying destitute in rags under hedgerows and in the gutters. Public administration is accordingly summoned to create and maintain the Admiralty, Air Ministry, War Office, Ministry of Education, and what is in effect, but not yet in name, a Ministry of Social Security. The provisions which are made in these offices for public services are backed by public authority but they are effective in practice because they represent a necessary division of labour in society. The actions of the civil servants in them have to be modified and adjusted according to the necessities of their task. They do not sit in them directing "political sovereignty" upon each problem as it arises in the way a fireman plays his hose upon a fire.

Thought about "the line of command" in public administration may also have gone astray because it has been misled by a facile analogy with military organisation. The technique of command taken from the barrack square where it is used to break human wills to inhuman purposes is a poor model for the constructive, humanising work public administration has to perform.

This effort to relate public administration in practice, as the civil servant encounters it day by day, with the abstract, theoretical concept of sovereignty discussed in political theory, may seem a long argument about words. It is necessary, not in order to discredit political philosophy upon which all speculation in the field of government must ultimately depend for illumination, but in order to postpone such speculation until the true facts about administrative activities and purposes have been made known. Analytical and descriptive studies of public administration, in proportion to their truth and accuracy, cannot but enrich a political philosophy which must be based upon them. Trouble seems likely to arise when this essential preliminary fact-finding is scamped or neglected. Then the relations of the abstractions, of which "sovereignty" is but one example to the world of administration, are often exceedingly difficult to trace and, what is worse, they may also be positively and dangerously misleading.

Social scientists will join with administrators in deploring the facility with which the abstractions of political theory—"sovereignty," "democracy," "liberty," "class interest," "power," "communism," "ownership and control of the means of production," "capitalism," "socialism," "planning," "equality" and others—are bandied about as slogans instead of being employed with the utmost caution and most rigorous preliminary definition by people whose experience of the real world of men and affairs enables them to be sure that they know what they are talking about. When such precautions are omitted, these potentially valuable concepts degenerate into mere empty counters which cultivated and able rhetoricians push around the dialectical chess-board in moves of ever-increasing refinement and complexity. Brilliant as their achievements may appear to the uninstructed novice, they solve no problems and bring neither knowledge nor real illumination because the pieces with which they play are shadowy, unsubstantial things.

**ORGANIZATION A KEY QUESTION IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY.**—Such, very briefly sketched, seems to be the true "political" nature of the administrative problem confronting modern societies. Stated as a problem of the organization of mankind for the achievement of common purposes and related therefore immediately and obviously to those central characteristics of all progressive human societies, the grand principles of the division of labour, and of the Rule of Law, the theory of organization clearly

points to real issues which are too often limited to general discussions and thus confused in a cloud of verbiage and so-called "dialectics" about abstract nouns such as the samples given in the preceeding section of this chapter. These abstractions are frequently nothing but perfervid forms of imaginative, almost emotional reaction to the admittedly severe perplexities of our age.

What does this mean if not that the problem of public administration should occupy far more attention and receive much greater study than it has attracted hitherto? Wise men may, as Sir Henry Taylor pointed out, have long ago realized that the execution of political measures is in reality the essence of them, but unfortunately they have not given practical expression to that conviction by following out the full implications of administrative action. Had they done so it is difficult to believe that the intimate connection between political, and therefore social, progress and the structure of the administrative organism would for so long have remained unformulated and obscure [*cf* the preliminary comment on Principle 3 in Chapter IV].

The purpose of this chapter is not, however, to read new lessons in political theory, although if they emerge no apology would presumably be necessary for them, but to discover methods whereby public administration can be improved. Changes and developments in public administration, supported and encouraged by any one principle, must obviously be controlled and co-ordinated by the principles as a whole. It would, therefore, be of no service to public administration or to political theory to advocate an indiscriminate extension of the sphere of application of the principle of organization regardless of the strains and stresses it might set up in other parts of the social economy.

A true and just appreciation of the nature of organization and of its power to contribute to social action is the first need in a critical estimation and evaluation of plans for new administrative activities. Plans for the improvement of public administration must start on a foundation of such knowledge not alone on a basis of wish-fulfilment reverie.

**THE RULE OF LAW AND RULE BY MEN.**—The broad distinction which needs to be made clear is the distinction between control emerging from the situation, from the conditions of social action, from impersonal standards established by the Rule of Law, on the one hand, and control exercised on the other hand, by men in authority, by "the rulers," by "the head ones," or by "*They*," as the word is so frequently and insinuatingly used, "'*They*' will not allow that"; "'*They*' will arrange this."

Who are "they" in such a context? The answer will show how far social situations are truly organized according to the rule of Law, when "they" will be found not to exist; and how far matters still remain

within the arbitrary discretion of a few mighty ones, when "they" not merely exist but are glaringly displayed for all the world to see and, for a time, to tremble at the mention of their names: Mussolini, Hitler, Himmler, Goering, Ribbentrop, Streicher and the rest.

It is far, far from being true, as some people have imagined, that Hitler, Mussolini and their Nazi and Fascist followers divined the future pattern which society must take and were the first to seek it along the road of a total organization of life.

No more fatal mistake could be made than to suppose that, pruned of its errors and excesses, the "totalitarian" solution must inevitably impose itself upon developing human societies as they search to improve their division of labour by perfecting their social organization. The search for the superman must stop. The call for leadership, if it means surrender of millions of wills to the will of a few, is an invitation to suicide whether it be made in the cause of liberty, property or labour. Leadership in a free democracy, or a free society, however organized, obviously has a great and important part to play. There is no perpetual motion machinery in politics and government or anywhere else. The Law which rules is not a static thing. It is the general name for the whole body of rules and regulations whose content must be constantly adjusted and accommodated to the changing needs of the society in which it rules. But these changes in an orderly, organically developing society will be changes of growth from a vigorous parent stem. The changes which occur will be evolutionary changes, not revolutionary upheaval. Political leadership must see to that. To the politicians is reserved the grand task of supervising the health—economic, legal, physical and administrative—of the social organism as a whole. They therefore must comprehend the nature of the division of labour by which society is sustained and the manner in which administrative action, within the Rule of Law, can be employed to improve it. Political leadership can and obviously should therefore exercise a great influence on the rate, quality, vigour and direction of public administration. It is the first principle of public administration that it must do so.

This discussion of the principle of Organization and the reference to its pathological development in the form of totalitarianism again demonstrates how partial and mistaken views of the contribution of public administration to social living arise in the absence of that balanced view of the subject as a whole which it is the purpose of this work to suggest. A balanced view clearly cannot be derived from the study of organization in isolation. No one principle, it is evident, is a sufficient guide alone; on the contrary, one principle helps to reinforce the others and is itself reinforced by them.

The brief reference in this section to the general contribution of the

principle of planned social organization to be obtained through administrative machinery draws attention in turn to another rewarding field in which to search for improvements in public administration. It has also shown how, without great improvements in organization, it will be impossible to expect planning to extend successfully over wider and wider spheres of social action. Because organization suggests to many minds a unified command exercising compulsory powers, it brings into sharp relief the position of the general public and their probable attitude towards extensions in the range of administrative regulation with the frustrations and limitations they are usually thought to imply. The importance of this question is so fundamental to any work on government that it requires further exploration which will be reserved for the final chapter. Deferring, therefore, consideration of the direction in which the Principle of Public Relations (No. 6) points to ways of improving public administration, the contribution suggested in this respect by the two other remaining principles (Nos. 7 and 8) may be briefly reviewed.

#### (7) PROGRESS

The principle of evolution and progress states characteristics of public administration, which, if truly described, are useful less in suggesting methods of improving public administration than in pointing out some of the forces operating within public administration and through which it may be expected to succeed in improving itself.

It has already been noted how the principle particularly [7.01 and 7.02] shows that it is the business of successful public administration to function as an essential part of the *Government* of a country. In this way public administration is able permanently to relieve Parliament and electorate of many old-time problems by which they were once harassed and on which they accordingly were forced to bestow much time, care and attention, often, it was evident, to very little practical purpose, as the succession of Acts of Parliament on the same subject frequently proved.

Later generations who inherit some of the evils of the past are rarely conscious of the massive positive contribution which the labours of their forefathers have made to the ease, convenience and even luxury of life. Until bombs rendered thousands homeless, the satisfaction of possessing a roof over one's head, although it be of dingy slate in a crowded London street, had not entered very vividly into the consciousness of masses of people.

Just as the material equipment in houses, shops, warehouses, docks, drainage systems, water, gas and electricity supply has been generally regarded as part of the established order of things, prearranged for unthinking use like the sun and air, so the administrative legacy of the



past, where it is not regarded as a positive hindrance to progress, to liberty or to both, is rarely assessed at the extraordinarily high value which should be placed upon it. It is desirable to change this attitude, not out of any misguided ancestor-worship but in order to realize the place of administration among the creative social forces at work in society to-day. Until the contrast between a State benefiting by an efficient public administration and a State (such as the Roman Republic) suffering from the lack of a Civil Service is pondered, this point is not likely to be realized as vividly as it should be.

The development of a Civil Service adaptable to the demands of modern social life was an achievement of the nineteenth century, whose value cannot be assessed save in comparison with the clumsy and often inefficient operating staffs which it replaced.

The subsequent achievements of that new Civil Service within three administrative "generations" (of about 30 to 40 years each) have changed the whole aspect of society and have provided a massive testimony to the truth of this contention, enshrined as it is in mighty Acts of Parliament and administrative codes on every manner of subject: public revenue, representation of the people, railways, merchant shipping, sea fisheries, land registry, pharmacy, telegraphs, poor law, education, pawnbrokers, mines, education, public health, local government, explosives—to pick merely a few at random. These labours have their monument in volumes such as the "Chronological Table of all the Statutes," and in the consolidated volumes of Statutory Rules and Orders, but they are rarely consulted by the general public by whom indeed their very existence is unknown.

The remarks upon the nature of organization in this volume (particularly in the preceding section) also illustrate what is meant by "mass and momentum" in public administration.

Principle 7 has its uses in any review of the methods of reforming Public Administration, but the lessons it enshrines are for the critics to absorb rather than to apply.

## (8) RESEARCH

The first principle, stressing as it does the great need for continued hard work at the elaboration and improvement of the technique and methods of public administration, points to an obvious source of progress.

The previous discussion of the previous principles, with the review of public opinion and public administration in the next chapter, will throw up many indications of the need for more knowledge. Their mere perusal will be a research programme in itself for anybody to whom they appear in themselves as somewhat of a discovery. The review of the occupational diseases of public administration (Chapter V) and the

reference to the dangers of bureaucracy (Chapter VI) should have reinforced the conviction that much yet remains to be investigated.

The cursory glance which is all it has been possible to give to many outstanding problems, and the rapid general review for which alone there has been space in an introductory volume of this type, will show only too well how much more we need to know in order to be able to use administration successfully in the great tasks of social transformation which may yet lie ahead. Much, and perhaps the most important part, of this additional knowledge must come as a result of discoveries, not in the field of public administration itself but in psychology, economics, political and legal theory. It will, in short, emerge from developments in the broad field of sociology which has been reserved for the twentieth century systematically to explore.

Some methods by which research in administration itself may be pursued were briefly indicated in the comment upon Principle 8 in Chapter IV.

A complete programme of research in public administration has yet to be devised. It will itself be revised, amended and further extended in the light of the discoveries it contributes to the subject as a whole. If the principles stated in this work adequately display the true extent of the subject of public administration they will, as asserted above, themselves indicate the scope of such a programme, but naturally not in full detail.

At the outset it is probably desirable to urge that research is needed into administrative art and practice proper and to utter a caution against the possible danger of confounding it with research into the subjects administered. The economics of unemployment insurance, customs tariffs, purchase taxes, death duties, and similar social problems involve matters which are not merely administrative, although the administrators dealing with them will not be the worse from an acquaintance with them which they mostly have or usually find it necessary to acquire. The administrative problems of giving effect to the social policy decided upon in relation to them are additional and they must be the chief concern of public administration.

Research into public administration must clearly provide for the study and critical examination of the Principles of Public Administration. Care has already been taken to point out that the statement of the Principles of Public Administration, to which this work has been chiefly devoted, has been made very tentatively. The preliminary tests to which they have been subjected in this volume have shown that they provide a conceptual framework of the subject which is adequate for an analysis of the differences between public administration and business and as a basis for a programme of administrative reform. It will be the argument

of this section that they are capable in addition of providing an adequate programme of research into public administration.

It is hardly necessary to point out that statements bearing so ambitious a label as principles must be capable of much more. They must find their main utility inside the field of public administration, not outside it. As it is impossible for any one investigator to summarize adequately the findings of several hundred thousand lifetimes spent in service in public administration, it is not to be expected that the first attempt to embrace the whole field in a series of principles will exhaust the subject. A volume as large as this might not suffice for an exhaustive treatment of any one of the principles. Those stated in the present work will have served their purpose if they provoke thought along these lines and lead to suggestions for their progressive restatement and refinement. They will justify their title as true Principles of Public Administration if they clarify the subject as a whole and expound guiding lines of thought and action to stimulate administrative activity to overcome, in the right spirit and therefore with success, the manifold difficulties by which it is at present confronted.

It is an ambitious programme, but how much more worth while than attempting to memorize maxims and practical "wrinkles" of the type illustrated before the statement of principles in Chapter II above. Valuable as these undoubtedly may be in the right hands, they cannot compare with the surer grasp of the whole range of the subject that emerges only from reflective, philosophical insight guided by fundamental principles which correlate and interlock to display a discipline or doctrine as an evolving unity.

Research into the principles of public administration themselves must therefore be emphasized as a very necessary preliminary or accompaniment to research into the various subjects embraced by the administrative principles set out in this volume. Running through these rapidly, the following specific research needs are a sample of some among the very many suggested by a superficial examination of each principle in turn.

At the outset it must be strongly emphasized that by research is normally meant, in addition to the statement and resolution of particular current problems in any one country, an examination of their history and a comparison of them with the treatment of similar administrative questions in other countries.

### *i. Administration and Political Direction*

Generally :

- the reciprocal influence of legislature and administration, the point of impact and weight of influence of political leadership upon administrative activity and techniques.

- legislative committees, executive government and public administration : the mechanics of their operation and an analysis of their achievement.
- the administrative technique involved in changing any specific form of social conditions into another.
- administrative initiative in legislation and its transformation into statute law.
- judicial appraisement of administrative performance in specific fields.
- delegated legislation as a technique of administration reviewed as an agency of social transformation in relation to the principles of public administration.
- a similar review of delegated judicial and quasi-judicial powers.
- the "spoils system" in public administration as a stimulant of administrative initiative and as a political aberration.
- control of the power of the purse as a means of control over public administration, its history, form and nature.
- public financial administration, its structure, development and impact upon administrative organization and achievement.
- factors in securing specific forms of social transformation other than public administration their efficiency and success and their relation to public administration.

## *ii. The Public Responsibility of Public Administration*

Generally :

- administrative codes of practice as contributory to the Rule of Law.
- the adequacy of administrative resources in fact-finding and recording in specific fields of public administration.
- promulgation or State publishing, as a device discharging administrative responsibilities.
- comparison of alternative techniques and the possibility of devising new techniques in specific fields in ensuring the reality of administrative responsibility and in minimizing the overhead costs of the present techniques.
- modes of reconciling the need for administrative initiative with responsibility through the executive to the Rule of Law and to the public in specific fields.
- symptoms and cures of bureaucratic tendencies in public administration under varying forms of control by the legislature and executive.
- degrees of flexibility in administrative performances in specific fields and the extent of permissible adjustment of general rules in their application to particular cases.

### iii. *The Social Necessity of Public Administration*

Generally :

- the administrative content of a theory of social action in relation to alternative possibilities of securing the same action.
- evaluation of administrative contributions to social transformation in specific fields in qualitative and in quantitative terms.
- the possible contribution of administrative technique to the diminution or removal of public evils at present treated partially or entirely ignored.
- the uses of coercion as a real or potential weapon in public administration in specific fields.

### iv. *Efficiency of Public Administration*

Generally :

- the contribution of researches in fields of public administration indicated under the other seven sub-heads of this section to the concept of efficiency in public administration.
- the possibility of determining coefficients of social transformation in specific fields of administrative endeavour absolutely and relatively to similar administrative endeavour in other countries and during earlier periods.
- recruitment and conditions of appointment to public administration in relation to the distribution of the national labour force.
- specific studies of practice in administrative routines.
- establishment of standards of performance.
- classification of types of administrative activity.
- psychological investigation into human characteristics yielding the best results in specific types of activity.
- training techniques, specific and general.
- psychological research into the possibility of increasing the range of human powers, particularly those of co-ordination.
- staff management, determination of most fruitful spheres of departmental interchange of staff.
- the rate of adoption of new devices in manipulating, mechanical and office routines.
- central purchasing and supply as a contribution to diminishing the coefficient of social transformation.
- the concepts of cost, capital equipment, depreciation, and overhead costs in administration.
- efficiency audits from the operative, psychological and cost stand-points.
- wages and salary scales in administration : standards and principles of adjustment.

Generally:

- comparison of administration and business and home and foreign administrative units from the standpoint of their efficiency and comparative cost in related or comparable fields.

*v. Organization*

Generally:

- analysis of administrative structures in the present schemes of organization to discharge specific duties.
- comparative study of organization between administrative and business units and between domestic and foreign administrative units.
- organization by area and by function, principles of their determination and combination.
- the theory of administrative responsibility [Principle 2], its relations to "hierarchical" or "scalar" division of labour and psychological aspects of organization.
- organization as a method of control in public administration.
- reciprocal influences of the constitutional or political organization of the framework of government and administrative organization.
- organization by "staff" and "line" studied departmentally and comparatively upon historical and international lines.
- invention, training and special technical devices, as aids in the extension of the range of individual comprehension of activities correlated in administrative organizations.
- the limits of organization in relation to individual initiatives and frustrations; the moving limits of organization in this respect.
- individualism and egoism in the social process contrasted with collectivism and the spread of administrative organization in relation to the development of genuine altruism and social conscience.
- the pathology of organization, the lessons of administrative failure.
- measures of success and indices of failure of administrative action and organization.
- central management of common services (printing, stationery, buildings, fuel, works, personnel), its economic results and contribution to administrative organization and internal controls.
- the role of interdepartmental committees in promoting administrative organization, including their overhead costs.
- horizontal correlation of administrative functions and its relations to the unification of the policy of the political executive or government.

*vi. Public Relations*

## Generally :

- State publishing, its methods and problems as a device promoting administrative public relations.
- Public relations techniques other than “publishing” proper (*e.g.*, broadcasting, exhibitions, public functions).
- the discovery of “the public” in specific spheres of administrative activity.
- the detection, assessment and measurement of public reactions to administration.
- the concept of “the public interest,” its relations to specific public or group interests and to the doctrine of administrative responsibility.
- the scope of advisory committees in public administration, particularly in relation to the principle of political direction [1], public responsibility [2], social necessity [3], efficiency [4].
- changing public attitudes towards public administration : an analysis of the process in specific instances.
- assessment of the extent, rôle and influence of public intellectual interest in public administration and an assessment of the possibility and the methods of expanding it.
- methods of fostering a “public relations conscious attitude” in administrative staffs in specific departments of public administration.
- administrative inventions in public relations techniques and methods of promoting further discoveries.
- publicity about public administration as a method of controlling public administration, an examination of the respective effects of parliamentary questions, activities of pressure groups, press campaigns in specific branches of administration.
- forms of parliamentary or popular control of public relations activities.
- public opinion surveys as aids in public administration.
- public relations as a device of public administration in non-controversial and in controversial subjects.
- psychological and administrative problems involved in integrating public experience with State activity.
- the doctrine of popular consent as an authority for administrative activities.
- techniques of interest representation before public administration.
- dangers of government propaganda, *e.g.*, long-term results of intensive efforts to condition people to accepting slowly mounting regulation, organization and consequent cumulative frustrations.

- public relations as a contributor to administrative efficiency and to the morale of administrative staffs in specific units.

### *vii. Evolution and Progress*

Generally :

- the history of public administration as a successful method of taking once controversial questions “out of politics.”
- the value of the “capital assets” to society of specific departments of administrative achievement.
- the staffing and other requirements of public administration as part of the coefficient of social transformation in relation to the distribution of the national labour force by industries and occupations.
- professionalism and the “occupational diseases” of public administration.

### *viii. Research*

- research into research methods and machinery.
- modes of facilitating the acquisition of information upon current administrative practices, problems and solutions overseas, library facilities, special reports and studies.
- administrative possibilities in delegating research work to universities and other bodies.
- the internal organization of research into public administration.
- the application of research results in administrative practice.

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## CHAPTER VIII

### PUBLIC OPINION AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

THE possibility of utilizing the activities described in the 6th Principle as "Public Relations" in order to improve public administration seems relatively new. On the whole the subject has had little discussion in works on political, legal and constitutional theory, which is all the more surprising in view of the key place obviously occupied by public opinion in a democratic State. The traditional attitude seems to have regarded the subject as adequately covered in all essentials by a theory of promulgation which confines the business of public relations to the task of saying what the law commands, forbids or allows. It is essential to broaden this narrow view of the public relations of public administration in the modern social service State. Several aspects of the question accordingly call for some review in enlargement of the preliminary comment on Principle 6 and in relation to the other principles set out above.

#### (1) EMOTIONAL ATTITUDES TOWARDS PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

The public, according to the genial, jaundiced, or neutral attitude of commentators on public administration, comes into the picture as beneficiary, dupe, or taxpayer. The great majority of the adult public are undoubtedly taxpayers and it may be supposed that just as the critics of administration wish to see them enraged against the authority by which they are supposed to be duped and fleeced, so constructive administrators responsible for orderly social progress would like to see the public become appreciative of the benefits they work so hard to provide.

The principle of public relations should not, however, be regarded as merely indicating a short cut to desirable emotional attitudes towards public administration although discussion of it has sometimes proceeded upon just this presumption. Public emotional attitudes are part, but by no means the whole, of the matter. They may indeed be regarded as potentially dangerous owing to the facility with which emotional forces can be perverted to produce the excesses usually associated with the behaviour of crowds and mobs.

If the principle of public relations is to be vindicated as a true principle of public administration, its potential value must be shown to be greater and its general contribution must be seen to be more profound than it would be if its reference were merely to emotional states.

The statement of the principle and the preliminary comment on it indicate that the deep underlying reality upon which "public relations"

is based must be sought in a true theory of human motivation and activity. It was consequently necessary to put the matter at the outset in psychological terms, which was perhaps a somewhat daring thing to do in view of the lack of any strong popular interest in psychological propositions and, above all, in view of their necessarily limited, provisional nature, lacking, as they do, a firmly established and generally agreed philosophical basis. To that extent the principle of public relations must be stated provisionally with yet another pointer to add to those already contributed by the discussions of the previous principles, to the need, declared in Principle 8, for more research.

## (2) "INTELLECTUAL" ATTITUDES TOWARDS PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

It will be evident from the preliminary comment upon Principle 6 that a "psychological" approach is desirable to correct the opposite error to that which, in the preceding paragraph, has been indicated as too exclusive a concentration upon the effort to change mere emotional attitudes towards administration. This opposite error, now to be rejected, is an equally undue concentration upon a merely intellectual attitude towards the subject. By this is meant the attitude which assumes that the one thing needful is for the great mass of the public to read about public problems, to listen to discussions about them, to buy the official Report on Parliamentary debates (which constitutional antiquarians have for the first time officially labelled *Hansard*), and generally to take as keen an interest in the official proceedings carried on in their name as if they were conducting them themselves. If only such a state of affairs be achieved, then, it is assumed, all would be well. An instructed intelligent electorate would produce an instructed intelligent legislature and the problem of democratic government would be neatly solved.

The only trouble about this undoubtedly attractive solution of the political problem in modern society is that it cannot be done.

## (3) INADEQUACY OF PREDOMINANTLY EMOTIONAL OR PREDOMINANTLY INTELLECTUAL ATTITUDES TOWARDS PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Why it cannot be done should be evident from the Fifth Principle, which shows that the whole task of public administration is so vast that to expect any individual to grasp it in its entirety would make too great a demand upon human capacity (5.04). "The public," Mr. Walter Lippmann once said, "consist of busy men reading newspapers for half an hour or so a day."

If writers on political subjects have in the past composed their treatises upon the contrary assumption that the public consists of intelligent people taking a keen interest in all current affairs and in political theory, it was no doubt because they were largely writing for the limited circle

to whom that description did apply. They did not perhaps bother to compare the figures of the sales of their books with the circulation, say, of the *Daily Mirror* or the *News of the World*, not to mention the twenty-five millions out of a total electorate of nearly thirty three millions who voted at the General Election in July, 1945 or to note that *eight million* people did not trouble to vote in the first General Election held after six years of war. It is also a fact that until the device of measuring public opinion by the statistical method of sampling had been tried, tested and proved to be a fairly reliable guide, one person's notions as to what "public opinion" might be on any particular issue was about as good as another's. Now, however, a vast amount of work has been put into the business of questioning the public on every conceivable political problem and on many administrative topics as well. The illusion that present-day democracy depends upon an omniscient, intelligent electorate is finally shattered by the results revealed in the answers to the questions in the public opinion polls. Take the simplest problem in government: Which of the two great political parties whose opposition rocks the United States, Republicans or Democrats, is most successful in keeping the promises they make during Election campaigns? At the height of a most vigorously fought Presidential Election between President Roosevelt, a Democrat, and Governor Dewey, a Republican, no less than 57.6 per cent. of the American electorate confessed in October, 1944, that they did not know. Despite the catastrophic events which ushered in the reign of President Roosevelt and the Democratic Party, one voter in three had no idea which of the two parties was most efficient in running the day-to-day business of the country; which had the best foreign policy; or which was likely to manage the country's affairs so as to provide most jobs in private industry.

Two Americans out of three who were of the opinion that their Federal Congress in Washington was doing a good job could give no critical reasons for their opinion. The one out of three who thought Congress was doing merely a fair or poor job was unable to say what his objections were.

The situation is not different in England. During the war, when it became urgent to change public attitudes in all manner of ways, the State was forced to re-examine methods of influencing the masses. Then it was discovered that the intellectual appeal was not effective with the masses. It was found that the sort of question which made working-class girls hesitate about volunteering for service with the A.T.S., for example, was uncertainty whether they would be allowed to use cosmetics. *The Times* objected to official propaganda designed to deal with such doubts because it was being conducted in "a commercial spirit" on the "patent medicine advertising level." But as the Advertising Service

Guild pointed out at the time, the question was how to get more volunteers for the A.T.S. In practice, a photo of a pretty, smiling girl above the question "Shall I be happy in the A.T.S.?" with a promise of reassuring answers to nine direct questions about life in the A.T.S., proved much more effective as an advertisement than one headed with the Royal Arms and the forbidding words "Important Government Announcement to Women," in which they were promised that "the registration of age groups will proceed steadily," but at the same time were invited "to volunteer ahead of their age group." The so-called "patent-medicine" type of advertisement sought to allay doubts and to attract girls to join. The straight "intellectual" appeal as good as told them "you will be in prison soon, so you might as well come quietly now."

"People at the level of *The Times* leader writers," said the Advertising Service Guild, "have for long shut their eyes to the facts of mass mentality. And to a large extent *The Times* reader is the civil servant and politician who ultimately determines much of the language of leadership. They have ignored, for instance, the huge section of the community who never use their votes at all. They have avoided the unpleasant indication of the football pools, one of the major pre-occupations of about half the adult population."

It is difficult to contest the truth of these remarks or to doubt that it is rash to suppose that expert knowledge of government can easily arise in modern societies. The principle of the division of labour in society should provoke the reflection that besides inviting inevitable disappointment, it may also be foolish to try to duplicate social activities in the detail demanded by the literal fulfilment of the postulate of democratic omniscience and omnicompetence. In order to arrive at this conclusion and at the belief that the intellectualist solution is no solution, it is not necessary to take a poor view of individual capacity, or to say with Professor Karl Mannheim, for example, that "most men have their roots in the older types of traditional society and lack the habit of personal initiative and the capacity to enjoy responsibility. They crave rather for subjection to a rule and are glad when they can glide on from one well-defined situation to another."—(*Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction*, page 187). An Englishman may be excused for pointing out that these words were translated from a German book written before 1939.

It is not that the electorate would be incapable of understanding administrative problems and acting energetically about them so much as the fact that they lack, and must lack, the time to devote to the task. What is more important, they lack the occasion and any practical incentive to the task. Consequently, they cannot develop a true interest in public administration.

For interest emerges from activity and activity arises in relation to some practical task or problem. It is not a practical task for the vast majority of the population to decide upon the solution of administrative problems. They care for none, or very few, of these things, and rightly so, as will be shown below.

If these considerations carry conviction then it follows that the possible extent to which public opinion can be relied upon to achieve improvements in public administration is considerably limited. Clearly, little positive reforming or progressive action can be expected merely by inducing an emotional attitude in the people as though they are to be regarded as musical instruments upon which the critics are to be allowed or encouraged to play harsh tunes which will frighten the alleged bureaucrats and make them mend their ways. Smaller hopes of progress can be built upon the more harmonious melodies the administrators might succeed in producing from the same instrument. It is also necessary to abandon hope that the public, with or without the aid of the Press, will be able to take everything done by the Government into account, approve the good, incite the indifferent to better achievement, or condemn the bad.

#### (4) PUBLIC RELATIONS AS A NORMAL FUNCTION OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

How and where can the public be let into government so as to be able to take a hand in the official administrative activities carried on in its name and on its behalf? About the merits of achieving such a result there is unlikely to be any doubt, especially in all branches of administration directly affecting the daily lives of the electorate (and these branches have multiplied greatly in recent years). The case was briefly stated in the preliminary comment upon the 6th Principle wherein it was shown how public relations, conceived as two-way traffic between public and administration, would show "where the shoe pinched" the public and help therefore to induce a more accommodating attitude in all branches of administration where the possibility of modifying administrative techniques exists. That possibility is probably a good deal greater than is commonly realized, even in departments such as the Inland Revenue, forced to operate drastic taxation laws where no latitude seems possible. Income-tax or death duties are by no means shoes which pinch by accident. They are inevitably known to be likely to pinch and pinch hard. Administrative adjustments in this field might seem impossible. Yet "Pay as You Earn" was essentially a public relations device designed to make inescapable laws bear less heavily upon certain classes of taxpayers, particularly the large group whose pre-war earnings had not brought them within the income-tax paying classes.



In devising equitable and efficient administrative schemes, every civil servant always has been, is now and should be a public relations counsellor. He or she may not, it is true, always have been very successful at the work; hence the appointment of specialist advisors to look after it. There is, therefore, nothing very new in the idea of "public relations," although it has been treated by publicists as something almost startling in its novelty. Perhaps the appointment of public relations officers in the Civil Service has a special interest for newspaper people and that is why they are heard of fairly frequently in the Press. Guardians of British constitutional liberties, who, as the discussion in Chapter IV showed, are always suspicious of anything which looks like the encroachment of the executive at the expense of Parliament and the people, have also seized upon the growth of public relations work as evidence of bureaucratic ambitions to gain power over the public, forgetting the force of the first three principles of public administration in Civil Service activities.

The appointment of public relations specialists in the Civil Service is nevertheless noteworthy because of the special emphasis it gives to a fide of administrative activity which has increasingly come to the forefront with the development of the social service state. The justification for employing such specialists, largely in a "staff" capacity [5.03], is seen in the principle of organisation [5.01] which carries the message that if a specialized job is to be done it must be somebody's job to do it.

#### (5) PUBLIC RELATIONS AND THE PROBLEM OF DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT

Seen in this light, the principle of public relations goes very near to the heart of the problem of ensuring or maintaining a democratic character for public administration. If democratic practice is to emerge from democratic philosophy and from the treatises on political science; if it is to play an active part as a real element in government, it is not enough for it to stop short at the polling booth. This is the essential truth inspiring those hopes for an omniscient electorate which have been written off above as illusory. Neither is it sufficient for civil servants carrying on the day-to-day work of the public departments to consider that the claims of democracy are satisfied as soon as the initials of their Minister have been obtained for every project they undertake. It is clear from the first principle that they are not merely entitled, but are compelled to obtain Ministerial approval, but theirs is also the wider duty of "not letting the Minister down"; not, that is to say, to rush a busy man into accepting large schemes into all the details of which he is no more able to enter than are the electorate. Critics of bureaucracy in modern life may try to seize upon a passage of this sort as proof of their conviction that public administration has developed to the pitch

that it is now the civil servants who make the pace and really rule the country. Let them do so and let them say by what other methods than those now operating the business of administration can be managed. *Of course* the civil servants must possess a knowledge of their job wider, deeper and more effective than electors and Ministers. That is what they are there for if the principle of the division of labour in society means anything.

The theory that the failure or imperfect execution of plans to effect social transformations is always to be laid at the door of public administration and never to be regarded as the result of errors of judgment on the part of the electorate, the legislature or the executive is completely unrealistic as the example of the failure of Prohibition in the United States well demonstrates [see comment on Principle 3].

Sir William Harcourt's jibe that Ministers exist in order to tell the civil servants what the country will not stand is, in fact, one of those half truths which partly illuminate this aspect of public administration, for it should be the business of the public relations aspect of administration to prevent the Minister being overworked in this direction. Clearly, no self-respecting, intelligent body of men, a characterization which few critics refuse to civil servants, will be content or should be expected to "work blind" as far as public reactions to their activities are concerned. The movement for better "public relations," therefore, arises within public administration for very practical reasons. They are also compelling reasons; urging the cultivation of a philosophical view of the position of public administration in society since they go to the heart of the problem how to regulate the pace and quality of schemes of social transformation, which have been declared to be the main task of government [1.04].

#### (6) PUBLIC RELATIONS AND PUBLIC ENLIGHTENMENT

The emphasis above has been placed deliberately upon one aspect of the two-way traffic of public administration, namely, what public relations can do to change or influence public administration. The justification for this inward-looking point of view lies partly in the fact that this work is concerned with methods of improving public administration, and this chapter is therefore largely concerned with ways and means whereby "public opinion" can induce or compel such improvement.

Its justification also lies to a very considerable extent in the fact that there are and should be strict limits to what public administration can do in attempting to change or influence public opinion. Does this mean that the traffic cannot be two-way after all?

Clearly, to limit public administration to a merely passive role in

relation to public attitudes would be to forgo the opportunity for public enlightenment about the forces changing people's lives. The need for some enlightenment will be accepted at once from the few statistical comparisons suggested in paragraph 3 above which reinforce the doctrine of the third principle of public administration [3.02].

#### (7) PUBLIC RELATIONS AND PERSONAL PUBLICITY FOR EXECUTIVE AND ADMINISTRATION

The principal responsibility for public enlightenment naturally lies with Ministers in accordance with the first principle of public administration, and it is therefore not improper but necessary that public announcements relating to the work of a Government Department should be issued in the Minister's name. There have been objections to this procedure on the grounds that powerful departmental publicity agencies are thereby set to work at public expense to create a reputation for certain politicians holding office. The second principle of public administration shows that no such objection can be sustained. The Minister whose reputation is helped by the efficient work of a well-run department is equally exposed to the risk of losing his reputation quite possibly through no fault of his own, if he is put in charge of an inefficient department. The first place in which the Minister will be expected to make all his important statements will be Parliament. Publicity for Ministerial statements of lesser importance may be made direct to the public through the Press or radio without constitutional impropriety. The Government are there to govern and Ministers have an obvious responsibility for leadership which cannot be contested, however much individual Ministerial decisions may be disliked.

It follows from the first two principles of public administration that whereas politicians cannot remain anonymous, civil servants should not be the subject of personal publicity. Neither is it proper for the conduct of individual civil servants to be debated in Parliament, since responsibility for their actions must be assumed by their Ministers [1.01, 1.02, 1.09, 2].

The question of the relation between public relations in public administration and the propaganda of political parties is not an administrative but a political question [1.09]. It points to the necessity of keeping the whole matter under review and control. The ultimate danger to be avoided at all costs is for State publicity to become so powerful that it is able, as in Nazi Germany, to create a public opinion favourable to it by sheer force and weight of propaganda. It can then point to this manufactured public opinion as evidence of a degree of public support to which democrats are expected to bow in reverence as massive evidence of public will.

## (8) LEGITIMATE FORMS OF PUBLIC RELATIONS IN ADMINISTRATION

With this preliminary difficulty removed and with the proviso in paragraph (4) above that public relations cannot be a device to enable public departments to get "power over" the public, the way is clear to state the principal objectives of public relations work in public administration.

They have been analysed by P.E.P. in its broadsheet on Government Information Services (No. 230 of February 2nd, 1945) as:—

i. *The presentation and release of departmental news* which then appears in the Press (including national and local newspapers, weeklies, magazines, trade press, women's press), the B.B.C., and possibly on the news-reels. The range of such news is as wide as the sphere of government itself.

ii. *Explanation.*—The official text of laws and regulations cannot include illustrations and explanations despite the fact that without such explanations they are often barely intelligible to many readers. Public relations can remedy the deficiency [such explanations are not themselves legally binding or legally trustworthy].

iii. *Background information.*—More than mere explanation, the provision of a background to departmental activities will often help to show the necessity and grounds of administrative action.

iv. *Public instruction and persuasion.*—In times of crisis, especially such as arose during the war, there is a clear need to get the public to co-operate willingly with the Government, often in opposition to its own immediate interests.

v. *Direct selling.*—By Government commercial services, such as the Post Office, H.M. Stationery Office and National Savings Committee, these departments need to attract business or to keep their potential customers aware of the facilities they can enjoy.

vi. *Works relations.*—Without total industrial mobilization for war public administration would not have made the incursions it has made into industrial relations. It has been compulsory for many years to exhibit certain official announcements in factories and workshops but they were confined in peace time to factory regulations, rules for certain dangerous trades and the minimum wage laws operative in other trades wherein wage regulations were made by Trade Boards.

During the war, when the national existence depended upon the output of munition factories and when working conditions were rendered increasingly difficult by the mobilization of workers and by other consequences of war, the Government intervened with explanatory and exhortatory posters designed to aid industrial morale and to stimulate output.

Wherever and as long as the partnership of capital and labour or management and labour remains uneasy, there will be obvious hazards

attending the intervention of any third party bringing a message of peace and harmony in industry, although it be in the interests of national prosperity. When that third party is the Government, that is to say a public administration commanded by a National Executive composed of the leaders of a victorious political party, the hazards do not need emphasis.

Should public administration be involved in such difficult tasks? The answer to this question is not an administrative question but a political question: As long as national economic difficulties continue to be grave with an acute need for manufactured goods for export to buy food and raw materials, there will remain a clear call for leadership in the industrial as in other spheres of national life.

#### (9) THE DISCOVERY OF "PUBLIC OPINION"

In the light of this summary review of public relations activities looking towards the public, it is possible to revert to the public relations activities looking from the public towards administration already signalized in paragraph 5 above.

The first principle of public administration demonstrates that it is in Parliament that public opinion should make its decisive impact upon administrative objectives and methods.

The discussion in Chapter V on the methods of Parliamentary control revealed in some detail how administration is influenced by the technique of question and answer in the House of Commons, by Parliamentary debate upon the work of a department, by Standing Committees of the House of Commons and by *ad hoc* Parliamentary or Executive Committees. Reference was also made there to the influence of privately organized "pressure groups," which is the name for sections of society seeking to propagate a special or a so-called national interest, by whom aspects of public opinion are often forcibly represented to public administration for sympathetic attention.

In addition to these more or less well-organized manifestations of public or supposedly public opinion, there stands the vast mass of the public who are inarticulate save for their occasional cross on a ballot paper answering the single and very general question, Who is to represent them in Parliament? What of their opinions? Who among them can be trusted as their faithful spokesman? Can we trust this or that newspaper editor, journalist, university professor, distinguished cleric, popular comedian, barber, bus conductor or taxi-driver?

#### (10) PUBLIC OPINION POLLS

If these sometimes very vocal and assertive sources are not to be taken at their own valuation as reliable opinions of that elusive creature,

the man-in-the-street, or the "common man," is it safe to rely instead, for a safe guide to public opinion upon the intuition of the administrator who is supposed to hear and weigh all opinions before reaching a decision? Or is there a more scientific way of discovering what the people think or feel upon any single important issue? If so, it would still be necessary to know how far such a manifestation of popular opinion should be followed in public administration.

Shortly before the second world war of 1939-1945, a technique of sampling public opinion upon a scientific basis had been worked out in the United States after one or two ill-fated earlier ventures, of which the disaster which overtook *The Literary Digest* is best known. This new technique has become a household word as the "Public Opinion Polls." Although at first they aroused considerable animosity and gave rise to some controversy about their honesty, accuracy and the desirability of giving them any greater consideration than, say, that accorded to the opinions of any news commentator, "columnist," or even the comic strips in the papers in which they appeared, it now seems evident that they have come to stay.

If a public opinion survey is not yet regularly provided as part of the routine service to Government Departments, is it because of ignorance, administrative inertia and obstruction or of jealousies elsewhere among the forces customarily regarded as the proper channels for the discovery and expression of public opinion? Or does the hesitancy arise from a sober realization of the difficulties and dangers of accepting public opinion polls as a guide for action by the executive and in the public service? All the objections which have hitherto been sufficient to exclude the referendum as a democratic technique in Great Britain are relevant to the opinion polls, with the added objection that an opinion poll is based necessarily on a very small, although scientifically chosen, sample of the community, whereas the referendum is a means of consulting the entire electorate.

Discussion of the public opinion poll cuts to the heart of the true nature of democratic government since the theory which would support it seems to rest upon the broad and incontrovertible basis that it should be the will of the people, not the will of public administration nor even the will of Parliament, which should ultimately be the source of authority and direction in a State.

#### (11) "PUBLIC OPINION" AS AN ILLUSION

Any arguments against so plain and seemingly so sound a democratic doctrine as this must seem to be casuistical and disingenuous—examples of the manipulation of phrases by means of which black is proved white; night, day; and an arrant rogue a Christian hero.

The fact is, however, that the attempt to set up public opinion as the sole standard of political justice and expediency or as the rule to be followed by public administration breaks down at the outset for the plain reason that over vast areas in which political decisions have to be made and administrative directions have to be devised, there is no such thing as public opinion in the ordinary sense of the words. Recognition of the essential truth of this apparent paradox was given in Principle 6.04, where it is stated that "The People" can rarely mean the whole electorate.

A further explanation of the inevitable weakness of the electorate as a guide to administrative activity flows from the breakdown of the "intellectual" attitude towards public administration. (See paragraph (3) above in this chapter.)

As so often in arguments on political and administrative questions, advocacy of the indiscriminate acceptance of public opinion polls as a guide to political opinion and administrative action can only be made plausible as long as it is conducted in general terms to which neither party in the discussion attaches a clear meaning.

#### (12) OPINIONS OF VARIOUS PUBLICS

A moment's reflection upon the tough, detailed mass of fact with which political leaders and administrators must deal is sufficient to show the force of this objection to accepting as an infallible guide to action that "public opinion" which so rarely comes to life and which will henceforward in this work appear in inverted commas as a reminder of its shadowy nature.

A political task of great interest, yet remaining to be accomplished, is a demonstration of the real extent of the hard core of fact in "public opinion." To a certain degree the "public opinion" polls have made a beginning upon such an analysis by providing in the enquiries a column for people who "don't know."

When an appreciable proportion of those canvassed for their opinion upon questions of the most vital nature and of general importance, such as those briefly referred to in section 8 above, confess their ignorance and lack of opinion it does not encourage optimism on the part of harassed administrators, especially those whose daily tasks lie in remoter fields wherein more detailed administrative adjustments are required.

There is, no doubt, a firm enough "public opinion" upon such broad general questions as whether health is preferable to disease, whether peace is preferable to war, whether the community can allow any of its members to lack food, shelter or the elementary necessities of life. The most benighted bureaucrat is hardly likely to need public opinion polls to make up his mind for him upon such issues.

Trouble for public administration arises because it is never these broad principles alone, but always their applications to society which are in question. As a wide general principle of social action descends to detail, so "public opinion" as a guide to action dwindles, not, indeed, always to vanishing point but to become of interest to sectional opinions of smaller and smaller groups.

A glance at the law of the land as it is revealed in part in the annual Index to the Statutes will be the best demonstration of the essential truth of this contention. Take a hasty sample of administrative questions from it at random. What is "public opinion" on modes of borrowing under the Local Loans Act, 1875; on the best rules for the property, funds and investments of Friendly Societies; on the law of lease as it applies to limited owners, corporations and local authorities; on administrative provisions governing the grant of patents for inventions; on the mode of regulating insurance business under such heads as: Life, Fire, Accident and Sickness, Employers Liability and Bond Investment; on the registration and dealing with registered merchant ships; on the financial provisions, funds and accounts of the National Health Insurance Scheme; on administrative provisions regulating the sale of fertilisers and feeding stuffs; on the safety provisions to be applied in the construction of reservoirs; on the regulation of seal fisheries and the protection of the grey seal; on the powers and liabilities of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners and Queen Anne's Bounty office in relation to the Disestablishment of the Welsh Church consequent upon the passage of the Act of 4-5 George V, cap. 91?

The catalogue could be prolonged by extracts from most of the two thousand closely printed pages of this ponderous legal work of reference. All these questions have meant serious headaches for many civil servants, some of whom may have been tempted to ask with Lord Melbourne, "Can't you let it alone?" The answer has been "No," and for the very sufficient reasons which will be evident to anybody who is prepared to examine the history of all these subjects and to rediscover for himself the troubles and embarrassments which varying numbers of the public have endured through ill-arranged local loans, fraudulent friendly societies, lessees "on the make," swindles in the names of insurance, or the crime of sailing unseaworthy ships. It has, in other words, been found to be indisputably advantageous to revise the division of labour in society, as explained in the comment upon the Third Principle in Chapter II, to provide for the performance of these duties. But to pretend that there is a "public opinion" on such matters, apart from the broad general rule that the public should not be swindled, or that seamen should not be sent to their death because some unscrupulous little ship-owner is short of money, would plainly be absurd.



## (18) OPINIONS WHICH COUNT EMERGE FROM ACTIVITIES

The "public opinion" which counts on such questions as these is not "public" in the ordinary sense of the word. It is confined to the few thousand, perhaps few hundred, or merely a score or more people whose occupation in the great society is to serve as officials of local authorities raising loans; on the management of friendly societies; in the offices of solicitors and estate agents; as patent agents or as inventors; in insurance offices, shipping offices, and so on.

Human nature being what it is, nothing on earth is going to alter this fact. As long as mankind depends upon the division of labour to augment the comfort and convenience of daily life, it will remain necessary to divert funds for local projects; to encourage thrift and foresight; to determine the socially most remunerative use of land, buildings, installations and equipment for which there are competing alternative employments; to encourage inventors; to provide against sudden calamity; to make certain that ships are seaworthy; to apply proper standards to fertilisers and feeding stuffs; to ensure that reservoirs do not burst their banks; to protect wild life; and, in general, to ensure the orderly transformation of one type of social structure into another type of social structure.

The realities of life are to be found on this matter-of-fact level of detail and their adjustment consequently becomes a matter which can be conducted only in the light of some considerable knowledge of them and their past history, together with some equally considerable competence in assessing the importance of their positive contribution to society. An adult society with an orderly political life conducted by men who take politics seriously has always realized that specialized jobs must be left to experts. In other words, the opinions which count in any walk of life are those which arise or are created by men active in these walks of life who know what they are dealing with and talking about. Whenever the fact is momentarily forgotten, hard reality soon brings it back to consciousness. If during elections hard-faced politicians or goggle-eyed street-corner ranters have burst blood vessels in frenzied efforts to lash public emotions to fever heat by trying to manipulate the stereotypes which happen at any particular time to be able to arouse some reaction in people's minds, they have to sober up on the morrow of their victory at the polls and face the real nature of the political and administrative task.

If by some accident mere rabble-rousers acquire political power, and such is the sober sense of the bulk of the electorate in a country of developed political traditions where public responsibilities are taken seriously, that they are unlikely to succeed, then they surely face a rude awakening. The ghosts and bogeys they successfully conjured

up would be found airy, unsubstantial things unable to contribute one single piece of wisdom to the fat files of papers in which public business is enshrined and wherein some official has to say precisely what ought to be done to move that particular business forward the day after to-morrow.

(14) "PUBLIC OPINION" POLLS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR POLITICAL LEADERSHIP

This reminder of the true nature of the administrative task is necessary if the scope of "public opinion" as a possible weapon of administrative reform or amendment is to be adequately grasped. It shows, for example, why a "public opinion" poll is necessarily an inadequate guide to administrative action. Such polls cannot be trusted because in all matters of detail, and not merely of administrative detail, opinions are only of value if they are the outcome of a sound grasp of the facts. The best, if not the only way of grasping the facts is to gain experience by living and working in the environment from which they emerge.

The very fact of the division and specialization of labour which characterizes developed modern societies obviously makes it impossible for individual experience to become public experience except in matters of the widest generality. Yet the problems which are often difficult to solve are the special problems. On them "public opinion" clearly cannot be a reliable guide because the public have no basis for their knowledge in their own experience. They do not, in short, know what it is all about.

Public administration must, therefore, under political leadership, often assume responsibility for representing "public opinion" and decide how particular situations should be adjusted or specific problems solved "in the public interest." Not "public opinion," therefore, but "public interest," must frequently be the beacon light by which public administration helps to steer the ship of State. The identity of the two can often be assumed, particularly in all wide, general questions. But that identity cannot always be assumed and where there are divergencies there will always be a call for administrative skill. This point had thousands of illustrations during the war when urgent decisions, often unpalatable and unpopular, had to be taken in the public interest. It is true that Ministers are necessary to tell the Civil Service what the country will not stand, but it is equally true that they are necessary to explain to the country what public administration cannot stand, in other words, why the Civil Service should not be expected to undertake some of the activities for which there may have been a popular clamour. Such a doctrine is no mere anti-democratic nonsense devised as a defence for bureaucracy. Public administration possesses no magic to solve intractable problems by a few strokes of the pen. When it is expected

to do so, it is the occasion for Ministers to demonstrate why it cannot. If there is not force in such contentions the necessity for Ministers could be whittled away. The will of the people on every issue could be determined by "public opinion" poll and all the Civil Service would have to do would be to carry it out. Anybody who has the first glimmerings of a notion what the mechanism of social action on a national plane involves will at once see that it is impossible to regard public administration in the light of a penny-in-the-slot machine in this way. Clearly, then, the people as a whole cannot and should not expect to be let into government as a whole. There is no sign at all that they want to be and their lack of enthusiasm, far from demonstrating that political institutions are decaying or that democracy is moribund, merely shows that they are satisfied on the whole with the arrangements which successive generations of politicians and administrators have elaborated for them [7.02]. The truth of this view of the matter will not normally stand out in sharp relief unless the administration fails to grow up to its responsibilities, begins to break down or makes some serious mistake. British history in the nineteenth century records examples of these faults. One public reaction to them at the time of the Crimean War was to form Associations for Administrative Reform and to conduct a virulent agitation for improvement. A more placid period has not unnaturally followed the evident success of that agitation. Similar phenomena are observable in the political and administrative history of the United States nearer to our own time and there are no reasons to suppose that the people of the United States will, as a result, fail to secure what they are perhaps already well on the way to securing—a form of public administration and Civil Service which completely satisfies them. It is evident that neither political leaders nor public administration can take a purely passive attitude towards "public opinion", whether manifested by "public opinion" polls or otherwise, without being false to the principle of political leadership which all government implies [3.02]. The positive, directing attitude which a Government must take will colour much of the public relations work of public administration. "Official propagandists," said the Advertising Service Guild early in the war of 1939-1945, "tend to forget the fundamental weakness of the *pleading* position in those who are expected to be in a *leading* position. They forget the depth and strength of the roots they are attempting to disturb. In consequence, official propaganda tends to touch only those already wavering. It seldom gets at those who believe that the State will command if it really needs. . . . Pleading is not the only alternative to compulsion. It isn't the next logical step. There's no need to plead with a man to get out of the way of a bus—if you can convince him that there really is a bus and that he's in the way of it. The keyword is *convince*." Conviction

is a state of mind which requires more than mere logical chains of argument to bring about. It emerges usually from a concrete situation, from a practical state of affairs. It arises, in short, from the same source as public policy, law, and the responsibility of public administration ; it arises from the need for social action. Here lies the whole case for political leadership, for administrative action and authority, as well as the justification for State propaganda and publicity. It lies in the plain need to transform one type of social action into another. It does not lie in any arbitrary, personal "power," "authority" or "sovereignty" of one privileged class of leaders or rulers, the "they" of the last chapter (page 169) and paragraph 18 below. If it proves impossible to convince the public because their lack of time to study the subject or perhaps their inadequate knowledge leaves them with an imperfect view of it, the moment has arrived, if the subject is one of vital national interest, to consider compulsion. Hence conscription, rationing, compulsory saving, high income taxes, purchase taxes, etc., in wartime. Compulsion, however, may engender conflicts and resentment, and it will then be the task of political leadership and administrative public relations to help in the search for ways of integrating the public attitudes with the administrative programme. These public attitudes may be of the positive and aggressive type usually to be expected from pressure groups, or often vaguely negative from a general public loth to have its habits disturbed. In either case a conflict is threatened.

(15) "PUBLIC OPINION" IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AS THE REPRESENTATION OF INTERESTS

"To let the people into government" is therefore misleading as a slogan in developed democratic countries living under a broadly acceptable constitution and giving complete allegiance to the Rule of Law. To let some of the people into those parts of government which vitally concern them is usually the real problem confronting such States. The long preliminary discussion which has led to this conclusion has been necessary because without it there would probably have been difficulty in securing assent to the strict safeguards and precautions by which the admission of the public on a partial and narrow basis must be accompanied.

Generous democratic enthusiasm should feel less restricted and frustrated when it is realised that over a great range of public administration it is limited public interests for limited purposes which are alone involved. The discussion of pressure groups has prepared the way for this conclusion [Chapter V]. The value of the contribution pressure groups can make was then mentioned, an attitude towards them not generally shared in the current and sometimes wild denunciation of

interests, "vested" or otherwise—as though the whole of human society could possibly consist of anything but "interests," whether they are interests of social classes, creeds, professions, labour, research, science, arts or technology.

Letting the people into government for all practical purposes, practical that is to say in the sense of amending administrative activity at the request of special interests, involves therefore providing for the representation of interests. Again, in the sphere of practical life the need for such representation arises only when conflict of interests or states of tension are produced between interests and administrative regulation. Where there is no ground for complaint, there need be no machinery for the representation of interests. Manufacturers of weights and measures have a special interest in the preservation of uniformity and accuracy in the national standards, but the Board of Trade stand in no need of an advisory committee drawn from the leading manufacturers and balanced by retailers and representatives of the consuming public in order to discharge their duties under the Weights and Measures Acts.

The presence of a conflict suggests the need for a judge to decide it, and it is evident that public administration has often to adopt a judicial attitude towards the demand for a hearing from interested groups.

#### (16) INTEGRATING CONFLICTING INTERESTS BY ADMINISTRATIVE MEANS

A judge cannot act without a standard of justice and public servants have only one standard, that which will satisfy the requirements of the second principle of public administration, namely, the standard of public interest. While it is possible, if not probable, that group interests are also the best judges of public interest, such a coincidence cannot invariably be assumed. Public servants must, therefore, seek so to resolve the conflicts brought to them by special interests that something is done to reconcile if necessary the demands of the limited publics represented by those interests and the requirements of the wider publics or public beyond them.

Obviously the difficulty of striking such a balance may at times become acute and be beyond the power not merely of public administration but of the Parliamentary Executive as well to resolve. Then it is necessary, in any law-abiding country, to submit the matter to the Courts of Justice or, if that resource proves inadequate, to the High Court of Parliament itself.

For the most part, the adjustments are resolved upon the administrative plane, very often by the means of those rule-making and decision-giving powers which, as it was seen in Chapter IV, have raised such a controversy.

The technique of organizing such administrative regulation poses at

once the psychological problem announced in the preliminary comment on Principle 6, particularly in the comment upon the place of "consent" in the administrative process. The wise words of Miss Follett upon this question deserve close attention. "Mere consent, bare consent, gives us only the benefit of the ideas of those who put forward the propositions for consent; it does not give us what the others may be capable of contributing" [in "Dynamic Administration" p. 210]. When this point of view is accepted it becomes clear that "genuine agreement is part of a slow process of the interweaving of many activities, and this is not consent but participation."

Participation or integration is the only constructive way of dealing with differences of opinion and social conflict. There are two other methods, neither satisfactory; the second is for one side to give in and to accept the decision of the other. This is the arbitrator's or dictator's solution. The third is for both sides to compromise; in other words, for neither to get what they want.

#### (17) INTEGRATION OF PUBLIC INTERESTS AS A MEANS OF SOCIAL PROGRESS

Participation, or the integration of conflict, said Miss Follett, involves three things: "You and I both get what we want, the whole situation moves forward and the process often has community value." When this attitude is adopted the administrator must seek at all costs to prevent an "either-or" situation developing. He must act in the faith that "there are always more than two alternatives in a situation." [*ibid* p. 215 and 219].

The essential importance of the right mode of approach to the problem of resolving conflict in the course of administrative work can hardly be overstressed, for it carries a message reaching far beyond the adjustment of this or that difficulty. It calls for a new attitude to the place and process of government in society without which mankind will continue to flounder, hampered and bound by old, profitless struggles between personalities and parties. Instead, the doctrine of solving conflict by integration calls for supreme concentration upon the conditions of the problem rather than upon the personal merits, demerits, motives and interests of those taking sides for or against some particular solution of it.

#### (18) CONTROL SHOULD EMERGE FROM SITUATIONS RATHER THAN FROM PERSONS

Social controls to be genuinely effective and truly productive are therefore unlikely to emerge merely by allowing one of the parties in a dispute to enforce his own solution. The solution of the conflict or

the source of control must be sought instead by taking into account all the conditions of the problem.

To what but to such an attitude as this can the mastery of mankind over natural forces be attributed? How else can there be hope that social studies will succeed in rising to a scientific level of rational intelligibility?

Miss Follett, who developed her own view on the supreme importance of integrating social activities rather than of taking sides in a perpetual war about them from considering the methods and teaching of biology, psychology and philosophy, pointed to the fact that everywhere the important factor is the "self-regulating, self-directing character of an organism as a whole" . . . the organizing activity is the directing activity. The interacting *is* the control, it does not set up a control, that fatal expression of some writers on government and also some writers on business administration." She held firmly that "Authority should arise within the unifying process. As every living process is subject to its own authority, that is the authority evolved by or involved in the process itself, so social control is generated by the process itself. Or rather, the activity of self-creating coherence *is* the controlling authority". . . . "A political scientist says in a recent book that authority co-ordinates the experience of men. It does not. It is just the other way round. Legitimate authority flows from co-ordination, not co-ordination from authority." [*ibid* p. 204].

In the light of such a philosophy of the social process, the problem of letting the public into government assumes a new aspect. So do attitudes towards a number of current problems. Miss Follett referred particularly to industrial conflicts wherein she detected what she thought to be a wrong approach on both sides. "Many employers are being told that they should study the psychology of the workers so that in the next strike they will know how to win. I think their aim should be not to be able to *meet* a strike situation, but to *create* a strike-less situation." [*ibid* p. 208].

Her complaint against many of the workers' leaders was that they "are making a grave mistake in not accepting this fundamental principle [that authority flows from co-ordination]. They see the whole labour question in the fight pattern . . . but as we have been trying that for several thousands, or millions of years, and it does not seem to be very successful, why not try another method? And another is indicated to us, indicated in the idea that one part can never get any lasting power over another, but that you can have self-direction by forming integrative unities." [*ibid* p. 204]. If her doctrine makes sense in the field of industrial conflict it is likely to have some bearing on the attitudes taken towards conflict in the sphere of government and administration. She quoted the

following remark by a well-known writer on political theory: "For the business of any educational system is simply to breed scepticism of authority," commenting upon it as follows: "I do not agree with that statement. Every situation in life has its own inner authority. To that we submit. By that submission we gain our freedom. What educational systems should do is to show us how to join with our leaders in finding that inner authority." [*ibid* p. 276].

Substitute the word "administrators" for "leaders" (which will have a question 'begging sound to partisans of the "fight pattern"), and the essential problem of administrative regulation and of the method of dealing with group interests in public administration is defined.

The possibility of regarding the problem in this light cannot be dismissed on the ground that it is a pleasant piece of neo-Hegelianism developed by an amiable lady constitutionally averse to the strife and bloodshed of the political arena. The accuracy of her analysis is confirmed elsewhere. For example, the notion that law is nothing but a body of legal propositions is weakened by the evident fact that in a great number of instances "judgment is rendered upon questions of fact rather than of law. And the fact is a matter of the inner order of human associations as to which the judge or public official obtains information from the testimony of witnesses and documents, experts, contracts, agreements and declarations" [Ehrlich, *Principles of the Sociology of Law*, quoted in Leiserson, A., *Administrative Regulation*, page 53].

"Being civilized," wrote R. G. Collingwood [*The New Leviathan*, page 326], "means living so far as possible dialectically, that is, in constant endeavour to convert every occasion of non-agreement into an occasion of agreement" and so of cutting down the employment of force in human society.

This way of looking at the problem illuminates not merely the nature of human conflict but lights up the path public administration should take in dealing both with conflict and with the problem of letting "The People" or "public opinion" help to shape the details of administrative action.

"The People" who wish to intervene actively in the detailed work of government will usually be just those folk having some practical interest in limited and specialized government action. "The People," in the sense of the whole electorate, may certainly be expected to take a lively interest in the great questions affecting national destiny—war and peace, the supply of food, clothing, fuel and shelter, the means of communication, price levels, public health, safety and education, and so on. But these by no means exhaust the great responsibilities of public administration as section 12 above well shows. On this vast mass of detailed adjustment the whole electorate may no doubt be counted upon to



contribute a general good will and desire that every worthy cause should prosper. The whole electorate cannot be counted upon to take a practical active interest in every good cause for there are indeed sharp limits to the amount of energy they can divert to the hundred and one complicated subjects with which public administration has to deal every day.

(19) ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS WHICH SHOULD BE IMMUNE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF SECTIONAL OR GROUP INTERESTS

Interest representation naturally takes varying forms in relation to the various administrative activities involved. There are some duties of government undertaken by public administration which are not, and should not be, subject to variation as the result of pressure from sectional interests or "pressure groups."

Attempts to analyse the spheres of government action on the basis of their varying accessibility to influence by group opinion have not been many but the subject has attracted some interest in the U.S.A., where Mr. Avery Leiserson's book, already cited earlier in this work, deserves special mention. It is not difficult to agree with Mr. Leiserson that administrative decisions which are primarily judicial in character fall into this class. It is part of the meaning of that Rule of Law which every civilized country must enthrone and obey, that administrative action in many spheres of government must pursue an unswerving course however much sectional private interests may want changes made to suit themselves.

The whole broad range of administrative activity which is primarily judicial in nature can rarely share its authority with, or even be influenced by, "interests." Inspectors of weights and measures, who are now called in to test every manner of mechanical check-weighing machinery, petrol pumps as well as the scales, pints and bushels of butchers, bakers and brewers; public health and sanitary inspectors; postal censors in war-time; all these administrative officials usually have the last word in matters within their jurisdiction. They possess, that is to say, powers of summary decision. In this class of administrative action may also be found enabling powers, licensing powers, dispensing powers and directing powers. Adjectives such as these are rich in meaning to all who have studied constitutional history and they will at once call forth memories of battles long ago as a result of which Englishmen took from the Stuart Kings their personal power to award privileges and monopolies, to set aside Acts of Parliament and to imprison without trial. The Kings lost these powers and so bitter was the struggle that many Englishmen may have thought that henceforward nobody else should use them. To-day, when they are again employed, it is under very different circumstances, for the Rule of Law governs their employment, not the arbitrary will of a King, still less the arbitrary whim of a

Prime Minister, Cabinet Minister or humble administrative official.

The same is true of the exercise of official powers to investigate and examine. One hundred years ago a writer such as J. Toulmin Smith could denounce (in 1849) the authority given to Royal Commissions of Inquiry as "illegal and pernicious," and important bodies, such as the Merchant Taylors' Company, acting upon legal advice, refused point blank to give any information whatever to the Royal Commission upon municipal corporations of 1835. Such attitudes soon became obsolete and commissions of inquiry, far from being denounced as unconstitutional, were often demanded and welcomed by special "interests" desiring to change forms of social activity, or inactivity. Consequently administrative powers of investigation form one means of "letting the people into" government. Nevertheless, the responsibility for fact-finding is and must remain upon the administration. The "interests" do not and cannot become partners.

In short, wherever administrative activities have a clear statutory standard to uphold, their loyalty to it must prevent their showing any deference to partisan interests in conflict with it.

#### (20) ADVISORY AND CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEES AND THE INTEGRATION OF "INTERESTS" WITH ADMINISTRATION

Interest participation in a "staff" or advisory function has more opportunity in administrative activities other than those mentioned in the previous section. There are rule-making activities of a "legislative" type, for example, in which "interests" may participate, often to a considerable extent. The possibilities open to "interests" in this direction, particularly when matters of a limited technical nature are involved, may sometimes be very great. Mr. Leiserson shows, for instance, that a close partnership has existed with profit to all concerned, especially the public, in the U.S.A. between railway engineers employed by the privately owned American railway companies and public officials in working out safety devices on railroads. Miss Follett's principles of seeking to integrate administrative and private attitudes for public purposes are particularly relevant here.

The value of consulting special interests during the rule-making process will generally be found in the opportunity it gives of eliciting suggestions and advice from the interests. It will not usually be possible to allow the representatives of interests to accept any real responsibility for framing policy. The contribution of the "interests," that is to say, will be that of advice. They will act as an auxiliary "staff" service to the executive administrative "line." The "interests" will not be given any legislative or executive power by administration, if only to accord with the legal maxim against the delegation of already delegated authority: *delegata potestas non potest delegari* (Chapter II).

Direct participation of group interests in administrative work, secured by admitting their representatives to serve as members of administrative boards, has been tried but has not been found in either British or American experience to be satisfactory. No man can serve two masters. The representatives of "interests" placed in such a position have to struggle with divided loyalties towards their employers and towards the official Board on which they serve, often with unsatisfactory results to themselves, to their principals or to the Board.

Loyalty to their normal whole-time employers is most likely to prevail in all such instances of unresolvable conflict. At the same time their presence on the Board may hamper their otherwise freely critical attitude so the Board itself does not get all the benefit it might from their participation.

On the whole, therefore, groups with special interests will probably themselves wish to avoid becoming directly entangled in official activities to the extent of having to accept responsibility for them.

The advisory committee affords a way out of some of these dilemmas and its success in this respect has led to great hopes being placed upon it. In the administrative fields wherein advisory committees have been used with success their contribution has been declared by Mr. Leiserson, in the work quoted above, to reside in their ability to help in the following ways :—

- i. Breaking proposed administrative measures on the back of the public.
- ii. Sharing public if not legal responsibility for administrative conclusions and recommendations.
- iii. Eliciting support from other members of interest groups for the ultimate administrative policy agreed upon.
- iv. Allowing interest groups an inside view of the forces at work in public administration and enabling them to influence the substance of administrative action.
- v. Permitting functional co-operation of the government with its component groups, *i.e.*, permitting that integration of public and private functions of which Miss Follett spoke with such emphasis.

In these ways the advisory committee can contribute much of value to the improvement of public administration. More precisely, its functions, as analysed by Mr. Leiserson, are :—

#### *Internal*

1. Advising on decisions of policy.
2. Scrutinizing and criticizing policies and procedure.

#### *External*

1. Interpreting the work of the agency to the public.
2. Giving sponsorship and prestige.

3. Raising money, influencing appropriations, securing amendments.
4. Interpreting the community to the staff.

In British experience the internal functions have been more important than the external functions enumerated, since British public departments do not depend upon adventitious external support for their prestige or finance. Neither have the public relations functions (1 and 4) appeared as a very significant addition to existing departmental resources. The case of bodies lying off the main track of the executive departments is less clear in this respect. The British Council seems at some stages of its evolution, if not still, to have relied heavily upon external aid from advisory committees. How long that need will be likely to remain, as such bodies develop their own techniques and personnel, is a matter for decision in the light of the special circumstances and conditions prevailing in each case. The B.B.C., for example, does not seem to have tried to use advisory committees as the British Council has done.

There are many aspects of the employment of advisory boards which it would be interesting to follow up, but the main contribution they are likely to be able to make should be evident from this sketch of their leading features, particularly as they are related to the preceding attempt to analyse the principal factors involved in the complex social forces regularly and misleadingly labelled "public opinion."

The "staff" function of the Advisory Board is always to be remembered [5.03]. Their impact upon "line" authority [5.02] is clearly limited by the independent responsibility of administration to the public through the legislature [Principles 3 and 2]. With these provisos there is a clear field for the advisory bodies and the administration to struggle towards that view of the real problem at issue between them which will provide a balanced, integrated adjustment enabling the administration to move forward with confidence and success to truly progressive solutions. It should be obvious that the representation of interests is never a device to allow them to plan for and secure selfish advantages at the expense of the community of whose interests public administration is and must remain the guardian.

It should also be evident that the advisory body is not a substitute for Parliament and that it is unlikely to be required in spheres of general political or administrative responsibility, such as in the conduct of foreign affairs for example.

With these limitations there is a real place for advisory committees in public administration, a fact already recognized by the existence of about one hundred of them in British public administration.

## (21) CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this chapter, therefore, as of so much of the problems discussed in this book, must be that when public administra-

tion needs improvement the most effective way to get it is for public administration to improve itself. If all hope of advance were to be pinned upon success in devising external controls and in mobilizing additional authorities armed with big sticks to beat sense into the bureaucrats, the struggle for improvement is lost before it is begun. External forces are not without influence, but the vital contribution has to be provided by or generated within the administrative system itself. Public relations can help to mediate in this process but the aid it brings will be limited.

What is true about promoting a better morale [Chapter V] and increased efficiency of the service is true in the public relations of the service, namely, that these desirable qualities are not, like patent medicines or vitamin pills, to be bought outside the service and applied to it in doses of varying size at regular intervals or as required.

Public relations should not be thought of as some rare essence whose formula is the jealously guarded secret of a new race of men known as "public relations officers," who are able to sprinkle it over a public department as a hairdresser applies scent with his spray, and lo! overnight any department regarded as the sink of incompetence in Whitehall will suddenly be transformed and restored to public affection.

If there were a department in so bad a way, public relations might certainly be beneficial in letting some light into dark places, but it would operate by no magic formula but by the unremitting hard work of the public relations staff whose first job might well be to show the directing staff where improvements were essential if the public were to be let into the place at all in a public relations sense. But the cure for such a department's troubles would have to be sought otherwise than by appointing public relations officers. A careful review of the entire working of the organization would have to be made and that would lead to the demand for an efficiency engineer instead of a public relations officer. It would call for the application of remedies framed in the light of those true principles of public administration which this book seeks to discover and expound. In this way it may call as well, as we have seen in the discussion of the uses of organization in Chapter VII, for the exercise of "the highest faculty of the human mind."

To aid in some measure to achieve reorganization and progress in this grand field of public administration, potentially so powerful an aid to the improvement of the great society in which we live, is a right and proper ambition for every public servant. To them, therefore, this statement and review of the Principles of Public Administration is modestly offered in the hope that it may contribute some pointers and signposts to lessen the fatigue and add new interest to the long and often difficult journey on which they are embarked.

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